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Ulama Of Recent Era



Chapter 1

Imam Khomeini (ra) - (1902-1989)

A Brief Biography of Imam Khomeini Hamid Algar

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[1] Introduction

It is in many ways remarkable that ten years after his death and twenty years after the triumph of the revolution that he led no serious, comprehensive biography of Imam Ruhullah Musavi Khomeini has yet been written, whether in Persian or any other language. He was, after all, the pre-eminent figure of recent Islamic history, for his impact, considerable enough in Iran itself, has also reverberated throughout much of the

Muslim world and helped to transform the worldview and consciousness of many Muslims. Indeed, it may be precisely this magnitude of the Imam's achievement, together with the complexity of his spiritual, intellectual and political personality, that has so far discouraged potential biographers. The materials available for the task are, however, as abundant as his accomplishments were varied, and the present writer hopes to take up the challenge in the near future (Given the preliminary nature of this essay, it is not extensively footnoted. For a complete list of the Imam's works, which furnish the primary material for his biography, as well as select secondary sources, see the bibliography at the end of the article). What follows is therefore nothing more than a preliminary sketch, intended to acquaint the reader with the outlines of the Imam's life and the main aspects of his persona as an Islamic leader of exceptional stature.

[2] Childhood and early education

Ruhullah Musavi Khomeini was born on 20 Jamadi al-Akhir 1320/ 24 September 1902, the anniversary of the birth of Hazrat Fatima, in the small town of Khumayn, some 160 kilometres scholarship. His ancestors, descendants of Imam Musa al-Kazim, the seventh Imam of the Ahl al-Bayt, had migrated towards the end of the eighteenth century from their original home in Nishapur to the Lucknow region of northern India. There they settled in the small town of Kintur and began devoting themselves to the religious instruction and guidance of the region's predominantly Shi'i population. The most celebrated member of the family was Mir Hamid Husayn (d. 1880), author of 'Abaqat al-Anwar fi Imamat al-A'immat al-Athar, a voluminous work on the topics traditionally disputed by Sunni and Shi'i Muslims (See Muhammad Riza Hakimi, *Mir Hamid Husayn, Qum, 1362 Sh./1983*).

Imam Khomeini's grandfather, Sayyid Ahmad, a contemporary of Mir Hamid Husayn, left Lucknow some time in the middle of the nineteenth century on pilgrimage to the tomb of Hazrat 'Ali in Najaf. (However, according to a statement by the Imam's elder brother, Sayyid Murtaza Pasandida, his point of departure was Kashmir, not Lucknow; see 'Ali Davani, *Nahzat-I Ruhaniyun-I Iran, Tehran, n.d., VI, p. 760*). While in Najaf, Sayyid Ahmad made the acquaintance of a certain Yusuf Khan, a prominent citizen of Khumayn. Accepting his invitation, he decided to settle in Khumayn to assume responsibility for the religious needs of its citizens and also

took Yusuf Khan's daughter in marriage. Although Sayyid Ahmad's links with India were cut by this decision, he continued to be known to his contemporaries as "Hindi," an appellation which was inherited by his descendants; we see even that Imam Khomeini used "Hindi" as pen name in some of his ghazals (see *Divan-I Imam, Tehran, 1372 Sh./1993, p. 50*).

Shortly before the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution in February 1978, the Shah's regime attempted to use this Indian element in the Imam's family background to depict him as an alien and traitorous element in Iranian society, an attempt that as will be seen backfired on its author.

By the time of his death, the date of which is unknown, Sayyid Ahmad had fathered two children: a daughter by the name of Sahiba, and Sayyid Mustafa Hindi, born in 1885, the father of Imam Khomeini. Sayyid Mustafa began his religious education in Isfahan with Mir Muhammad Taqi Mudarrisi before continuing his studies in Najaf and Samarra under the guidance of Mirza Hasan Shirazi (d.1894), the principal authority of the age in Shi'i jurisprudence. This corresponded to a pattern of preliminary study in Iran followed by advanced study in the 'atabat, the shrine cities of Iraq, which for long remained normative; Imam Khomeini was in fact the first religious leader of prominence whose formation took place entirely in Iran.

In Dhu 'l-Hijja 1320/ March 1903, some five months after the Imam's birth, Sayyid Mustafa was attacked and killed while travelling on the road between Khumayn and the neighboring city of Arak.

The identity of the assassin immediately became known; it was Ja'far-quli Khan, the cousin of a certain Bahram Khan, one of the richest landowners of the region. The cause of the assassination is, however, difficult to establish with certainty. According to an account that became standard after the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, Sayyid Mustafa had aroused the anger of the local landowners because of his defence of the impoverished peasantry.

However, Sayyid Mustafa himself, in addition to the religious functions he fulfilled, was also a farmer of moderate prosperity, and it is possible that he fell victim to one of the disputes over irrigation rights that were common at the time. A third explanation is that Sayyid Mustafa, in his capacity of shar'ia judge of Khumayn, had punished someone for a public violation of the fast of Ramadan and that the family of the offender then exacted a deadly revenge (*Interview of the present writer with Hajj Sayyid Ahmad Khomeini, son of the Imam, Tehran, 12 September, 1982*). The

attempts of Sahiba, Sayyid Mustafa's sister, to have the killer punished in Khumayn proved fruitless, so his widow, Hajar, went to Tehran to appeal for justice, according to one account carrying the infant Ruhullah in her arms. She was followed there by her two elder sons, Murtaza and Nur al-Din, and finally, in Rabi' al-Awwal 1323/ May 1925, Ja'far-quli Khan was publicly executed in Tehran on the orders of 'Ayn al-Dawla, the prime minister of the day.

In 1918, the Imam lost both his aunt, Sahiba, who had played a great role in his early upbringing, and his mother, Hajar. Responsibility for the family then devolved on the eldest brother, Sayyid Murtaza (later to be known as Ayatullah Pasandida). The material welfare of the brothers seems to have been ensured by their father's estate, but the insecurity and lawlessness that had cost him his life continued. In addition to the incessant feuds among landowners, Khumayn was plagued by the raids mounted on the town by the Bakhtiyari and Lur tribesmen whenever they had the chance.

Once when a Bakhtiyari chieftain by the name of Rajab 'Ali came raiding, the young Imam was obliged to take up a rifle together with his brothers and defend the family home. When recounting these events many years later, the Imam remarked: "I have been at war since my childhood." (*Imam Khomeini, Sahifa-yi Nur, Tehran, 1361 Sh./1982, X, p. 63*). Among the scenes he witnessed during his youth and that remained in his memory to help shape his later political activity mention may also be made of the arbitrary and oppressive deeds of landowners and provincial governors. Thus he recalled in later years how a newly arrived governor had arrested and bastinadoed the chief of the merchants' guild of Gulpayagan for no other purpose than the intimidation of its citizens (*Sahifa-yi Nur, XVI, p. 121*).

Imam Khomeini began his education by memorizing the Qur'an at a maktab operated near his home by a certain Mulla Abu 'l-Qasim; he became a hafiz by the age of seven. He next embarked on the study of Arabic with Shaykh Ja'far, one of his mother's cousins, and took lessons on other subjects first from Mirza Mahmud Iftikhar al-'Ulama' and then from his maternal uncle, Haji Mirza Muhammad Mahdi. His first teacher in logic was Mirza Riza Najafi, his brother-in-law. Finally, among his instructors in Khumayn mention may be made of the Imam's elder brother, Murtaza, who taught him Najm al-Din Katib Qazvini's al-Mutawwal on badi' and ma'ani and one of the treatises of al-Suyuti on grammar and syntax. (Although Sayyid Murtaza - who took the surname Pasandida

after the law mandating the choice of a surname in 1928 - studied for a while in Isfahan, he never completed the higher levels of religious education; after working for a while in the registrar's office in Khumayn, he moved to Qum where he was to spend the rest of his life).

In 1339/1920-21, Sayyid Murtaza sent the Imam to the city of Arak (or Sultanabad, as it was then known) in order for him to benefit from the more ample educational resources available there. Arak had become an important center of religious learning because of the presence of Ayatullah 'Abd al-Karim Ha'iri (d.1936), one of the principal scholars of the day. He had arrived there in 1332/1914 at the invitation of the townspeople, and some three hundred students - a relatively large number - attended his lectures at the Mirza Yusuf Khan madrasa. It is probable that Imam Khomeini was not yet advanced enough to study directly under Ha'iri; instead, he worked on logic with Shaykh Muhammad Gulpayagani, read the Sharh al-Lum'a of Shaykh Zayn al-Din al-'Amili (d. 996/1558) one of the principal texts of Ja'fari jurisprudence, with Aqa-yi 'Abbas Araki, and continued his study of al-Mutawwal with Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali Burujirdi. Roughly a year after the Imam's arrival in Arak, Ha'iri accepted a summons from the 'ulama' of Qum to join them and preside over their activity. One of the earliest strongholds of Shi'ism in Iran, Qum had traditionally been a major center of religious learning as well as pilgrimage to the shrine of Hazrat-I Ma'suma, a daughter of Imam Musa al-Kazim, but it had been overshadowed for many decades by the shrine cities of Iraq with their superior resources of erudition.

The arrival of Ha'iri in Qum not only brought about a revival of its madrasas but also began a process whereby the city became in effect the spiritual capital of Iran, a process that was completed by the political struggle launched there by Imam Khomeini some forty years later. The Imam followed Ha'iri to Qum after an interval of roughly four months. This move was the first important turning point in his life. It was in Qum that he received all his advanced spiritual and intellectual training, and he was to retain a deep sense of identification with the city throughout the rest of his life. It is possible, indeed, although not in a reductive sense, to describe him as a product of Qum. In 1980, when addressing a group of visitors from Qum, he declared: "Wherever I may be, I am a citizen of Qum, and take pride in the fact. My heart is always with Qum and its people." (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, XII, p. 51).

[3] The Years of Spiritual and Intellectual Formation in Qum, 1923 to 1962

After his arrival in Qum in 1922 or 1923, the Imam first devoted himself to completing the preliminary stage of madrasa education known as *sutuh*; this he did by studying with teachers such as Shaykh Muhammad Riza Najafi Masjid-i Shahi, Mirza Muhammad Taqi Khwansari, and Sayyid 'Ali Yasribi Kashani. However, from his early days in Qum, the Imam gave an indication that he was destined to become more than another great authority on Ja'fari jurisprudence. He showed an exceptional interest in subjects that not only were usually absent from the madrasa curriculum but were often an object of hostility and suspicion: philosophy, in its various traditional schools, and gnosticism (*'irfan*). He began cultivating this interest by studying the *Tafsir-i Safi*, a commentary on the Qur'an by the Sufistically-inclined Mulla Muhsin Fayz-i Kashani (d.1091/1680), together with the late Ayatullah 'Ali Araki (d. 1994), then a young student like himself. His formal instruction in gnosticism and the related discipline of ethics began with classes taught by Haji Mirza Javad Maliki-Tabrizi, but this scholar died in 1304/1925. Similarly, the Imam was not able to benefit for long from his first teacher in philosophy, Mirza 'Ali Akbar Hakim Yazdi, a pupil of the great master Mulla Hadi Sabzavari (d.1295/1878), for Yazdi passed away in 1305/1926. Another of the Imam's early instructors in philosophy was Sayyid Abu 'l-Hasan Qazvini (d. 1355/1976), a scholar of both peripatetic and illuminationist philosophy; the Imam attended his circle until Qazvini's departure from Qum in 1310/1931.

The teacher who had the most profound influence on Imam Khomeini's spiritual development was, however, Mirza Muhammad 'Ali Shahabadi (d. 1328 Sh./1950); to him the Imam refers in a number of his works as *shaykhuna* and *'arif-i kamil*, and his relationship with him was that of a *murid* with his *murshid*. When Shahabadi first came to Qum in 1307 Sh./1928, the young Imam asked him a question concerning the nature of revelation, and was captivated by the answer he received.

At his insistent request, Shahabadi consented to teach him and a few other select students the *Fusus al-Hikam* of Ibn 'Arabi. Although the basis of instruction was Da'ud Qaysari's commentary on the *Fusus*, the Imam testified that Shahabadi also presented his own original insights on the text.

Among the other texts that Imam Khomeini studied with Shahabadi were the *Manazil al-Sa'irin* of the Hanbali Sufi, Khwaja 'Abdullah Ansari (d.482/1089), and the *Misbah al-Uns* of Muhammad b. Hamza Fanari (d.

834/1431), a commentary on the Mafatih al-Ghayb of Sadr al-Din Qunavi (d.673/1274).

It is conceivable that the Imam derived from Shahabadi, at least in part, whether consciously or not, the fusion of gnostic and political concerns that came to characterize his life. For this spiritual master of the Imam was one of the relatively few 'ulama' in the time of Riza Shah to preach publicly against the misdeeds of the regime, and in his *Shadharat al-Ma'arif*, a work primarily gnostic in character, described Islam as "most certainly a political religion." (*Shadharat al-Ma'arif*, Tehran, 136 Sh./1982, pp. 6-7).

Gnosis and ethics were also the subject of the first classes taught by the Imam. The class on ethics taught by Haji Javad Aqa Maliki Tabrizi were resumed, three years after his death, by Shahabadi, and when Shahabadi left for Tehran in 1936 he assigned the class to Imam Khomeini. The class consisted in the first place of a careful reading of Ansari's *Manazil al-Sa'irin*, but ranged beyond the text to touch on a wide variety of contemporary concerns. It proved popular to the extent that the townsfolk of Qum as well as the students of the religious sciences attended, and people are related to have come from as far afield as Tehran and Isfahan simply to listen to the Imam. This popularity of the Imam's lectures ran contrary to the policies of the Pahlavi regime, which wished to limit the influence of the 'ulama' outside the religious teaching institution. The government therefore secured the transfer of the lectures from the prestigious location of the Fayziya madrasa to the Mulla Sadiq madrasa, which was unable to accommodate large crowds.

However, after the deposition of Riza Shah in 1941, the lectures returned to the Fayziya madrasa and instantly regained their former popularity. The ability to address the people at large, not simply his own colleagues within the religious institution, that the Imam displayed for the first time in these lectures on ethics, was to play an important role in the political struggles he led in later years. While teaching ethics to a wide and diverse audience, Imam Khomeini began teaching important texts of gnosis, such as the section on the soul in *al-Asfar al-Arba'a* of Mulla Sadra (d. 1050/1640) and Sabzavari's *Sharh-I Manzuma*, to a select group of young scholars that included Murtaza Mutahhari and Husayn 'Ali Muntaziri, who subsequently became two of his principal collaborators in the revolutionary movement he launched some three decades later.

As for the earliest writings of the Imam, they also indicate that his primary interest during his early years in Qum was gnosis. In 1928, for example, he completed the *Sharh Du'a' al-Sahar*, a detailed commentary on the supplicatory prayers recited throughout Ramadan by Imam Muhammad al-Baqir; as with all Imam Khomeini's works on gnosis, the terminology of Ibn 'Arabi is frequently encountered in this book. Two years later, he completed *Misbah al-Hidaya ila 'l-Khilafa wa 'l-Wilaya*, a dense and systematic treatise on the main topics of gnosis. Another product of the same years of concentration on gnosis was a series of glosses on Qaysari's commentary on the *Fusus*.

In a brief autobiography written for inclusion in a book published in 1934, the Imam wrote that he spent most of his time studying and teaching the works of Mulla Sadra; that he had for several years been studying gnosis with Shahabadi; and that at the same time he was attending the classes of Ayatullah Ha'iri on fiqh (*Sayyid 'Ali Riza Yazdi Husayni, Aina-yi Danishvaran, Tehran, 1353/1934, pp.65-7*). The sequence of these statements suggests that fiqh was as yet secondary among his concerns.

This situation was to change, but gnosis was for the Imam never simply a topic for study, teaching and writing. It remained an integral part of his intellectual and spiritual personality, and as such infused many of his ostensibly political activities in later years with an unmistakably gnostic element. The Imam did not engage in any overt political activities during the 1930's. He always believed that the leadership of political activities should be in the hands of the foremost religious scholars, and he was therefore obliged to accept the decision of Ha'iri to remain relatively passive toward the measures taken by Riza Shah against the traditions and culture of Islam in Iran. In any event, as a still junior figure in the religious institution in Qum, he would have been in no position to mobilize popular opinion on a national scale. He was nonetheless in contact with those few 'ulama' who did openly challenge Riza Shah, not only Shahabadi, but also men such as Haji Nurullah Isfahani, Mirza Sadiq Aqa Tabrizi, Aqazada Kifai, and Sayyid Hasan Mudarris. He expressed his own opinions of the Pahlavi regime, the leading characteristics of which he identified as oppression and hostility to religion, as yet only allusively, in privately circulated poems (*Sayyid Hamid Ruhani, Barrasi va Tahlili az Nahzat-I Imam Khumayni, I, Najaf, n.d., pp. 55-9*).

He assumed a public political stance for the first time in a proclamation dated 15 Urdibihisht 1323/ 4 May 1944 that called for action to

deliver the Muslims of Iran and the entire Islamic world from the tyranny of foreign powers and their domestic accomplices. The Imam begins by citing Qur'an, 34:46 ("Say: 'I enjoin but one thing upon you, that you rise up for Allah, in pairs and singly, and then reflect'"). This is the same verse that opens the chapter on awakening (bab al-yaqza) at the very beginning of Ansari's *Manazil al-Sa'irin*, the handbook of spiritual wayfaring first taught to the Imam by Shahabadi. The Imam's interpretation of "rising up" is, however, both spiritual and political, both individual and collective, a rebellion against lassitude in the self and corruption in society.

The same spirit of comprehensive revolt inspires the first work written by the Imam for publication, *Kashf al-Asrar* (Tehran, 1324 Sh./1945). He is said to have completed the book in forty eight days from a sense of urgency, and that it indeed met a need is proven by the fact that it went through two impressions in its first year. The principal aim of the book, as reflected in its title, was to refute 'Ali Akbar Hakamizada's *Asrar-i Hazarsala*, a work calling for a "reform" of Shi'i Islam. Similar attacks on Shi'i tradition were being made in the same period by Shari'at Sanglaji (d.1944), an admirer of Wahhabism despite that sect's marked hostility to Shi'ism, and Ahmad Kasravi (d. 1946), competent as a historian but mediocre as a thinker. The Imam's vindication of such aspects of Shi'i practice as the mourning ceremonies of Muharram, pilgrimage (ziyara) to the tombs of the Imams, and the recitation of the supplicatory prayers composed by the Imams, was therefore a response to the criticisms made by all three. Imam Khomeini connected their assaults on tradition with the antireligious policies of Riza Shah and bitterly criticized the Pahlavi regime for destroying public morality. He stopped short, however, of demanding the abolition of the monarchy, proposing instead that an assembly of competent mujtahids should choose "a just monarch who will not violate God's laws and will shun oppression and wrongdoing, who will not transgress against men's property, lives and honor" (*Kashf al-Asrar*, p. 185). Even this conditional legitimacy of monarchy was to last "only so long as a better system could not be established" (*Kashf al-Asrar*, p. 186). There can be no doubt that the "better system" already envisaged by Imam Khomeini in 1944 was vilayat-i faqih, which became the constitutional cornerstone of the Islamic Republic of Iran established in 1979.

When Shaykh 'Abd al-Karim Ha'iri died in 1936, the supervision of the religious institution in Qum had been jointly assumed by Ayatullah Khwansari, Ayatullah Sadr, and Ayatullah Hujjat. A sense of lack was nonetheless felt. When Ayatullah Abu 'l-Hasan Isfahani, the principal marja'-

i taqlid of the age residing in Najaf, died in 1946, the need for a centralized leadership of Shi'i Muslims became more felt more acutely, and a search began for a single individual capable of fulfilling the duties and functions of both Ha'iri and Isfahani. Ayatullah Burujirdi, then resident in Hamadan, was seen to be the most suitable person available, and Imam Khomeini is said to have played an important role in persuading him to come to Qum. In this he was no doubt motivated in part by the hope that Burujirdi would adopt a firm position vis—vis Muhammad Riza Shah, the second Pahlavi ruler. This hope was to remain largely unfulfilled. In April 1949, Imam Khomeini learned that Burujirdi was engaged in negotiations with the government concerning possible emendations to the constitution then in force, and he wrote him a letter expressing his anxieties about the possible consequences. In 1955, a nationwide campaign against the Baha'i sect was launched, for which the Imam sought to recruit Burujirdi's support, but he had little success. As for religious personalities who were militantly active in the political sphere at the time, notably Ayatullah Abu 'l-Qasim Kashani and Navvab Safavi, the leader of the Fida'iyān-i Islam, the Imam's contacts with them were sporadic and inconclusive.

His reluctance for direct political involvement in this period was probably due to his belief that any movement for radical change ought to be led by the senior echelons of the religious establishment. In addition, the most influential personage on the crowded and confused political scene of the day was the secular nationalist, Dr. Muhammad Musaddiq. Imam Khomeini therefore concentrated during the years of Burujirdi's leadership in Qum on giving instruction in fiqh and gathering round him students who later became his associates in the movement that led to the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime, not only Mutahhari and Muntaziri, but younger men such as Muhammad Javad Bahonar and 'Ali Akbar Hashimi-Rafsanjani. In 1946, he began teaching *usul al-fiqh* at the *kharij* level, taking as his text the chapter on rational proofs from the second volume of the *Kifayat al-Usul* of Akhund Muhammad Kazim Khurasani (d. 1329/1911).

Initially attended by no more than thirty students, the class became so popular in Qum that five hundred were in attendance the third time it was offered. According to the reminiscences of some of those who took the class, it was distinguished from other classes taught in Qum on the same subject by the critical spirit the Imam instilled in his students, as well as his ability to connect fiqh with all the other dimensions of Islam - ethical, gnostic, philosophical, political, and social.

[4] The Years of Struggle and Exile, 1962-1978

The emphases of the Imam's activity began to change with the death of Burujirdi on March 31, 1961, for he now emerged as one of the successors to Burujirdi's position of leadership. This emergence was signalled by the publication of some of his writings on fiqh, most importantly the basic handbook of religious practice entitled, like others of its genre, *Tauzih al-Masa'il*. He was soon accepted as *marja'-i taqlid* by a large number of Iranian Shi'is. His leadership role was, however, destined to go far beyond that traditional for a *marja'-i taqlid* and to attain a comprehensiveness unique in the history of the Shi'i 'ulama'.

This became apparent soon after the death of Burujirdi when Muhammad Riza Shah, secure in his possession of power after the CIA-organized coup of August 1953, embarked on a series of measures designed to eliminate all sources of opposition, actual or potential, and to incorporate Iran firmly into American patterns of strategic and economic domination. In the autumn of 1962, the government promulgated new laws governing elections to local and provincial councils which deleted the former requirement that those elected be sworn into office on the Qur'an. Seeing in this a plan to permit the infiltration of public life by the Baha'is, Imam Khomeini telegraphed both the Shah and the prime minister of the day, warning them to desist from violating both the law of Islam and the Iranian Constitution of 1907, failing which the 'ulama' would engage in a sustained campaign of protest. Rejecting all compromise measures, the Imam was able to force the repeal of the laws in question seven weeks after they had been promulgated. This achievement marked his emergence on the scene as the principal voice of opposition to the Shah.

A more serious confrontation was not long in coming. In January 1963, the Shah announced a sixpoint program of reform that he termed the White Revolution, an American-inspired package of measures designed to give his regime a liberal and progressive facade. Imam Khomeini summoned a meeting of his colleagues in Qum to press upon them the necessity of opposing the Shah's plans, but they were initially hesitant. They sent one of their number, Ayatullah Kamalvand, to see the Shah and gauge his intentions. Although the Shah showed no inclination to retreat or compromise, it took further pressure by Imam Khomeini on the other senior 'ulama' of Qum to persuade them to decree a boycott of the referendum that the Shah had planned to obtain the appearance of

popular approval for his White Revolution. For his own part, Imam Khomeini issued on January 22, 1963 a strongly worded declaration denouncing the Shah and his plans. In imitation, perhaps, of his father, who had taken an armored column to Qum in 1928 in order to intimidate certain outspoken 'ulama', the Shah came to Qum two days later. Faced with a boycott by all the dignitaries of the city, he delivered a speech harshly attacking the 'ulama' as a class.

On January 26, the referendum was held, with a low turnout that reflected the growing heed paid by the Iranian people to Imam Khomeini's directives. He continued his denunciation of the Shah's programs, issuing a manifesto that also bore the signatures of eight other senior scholars. In it he listed the various ways in which the Shah had violated the constitution, condemned the spread of moral corruption in the country, and accused the Shah of comprehensive submission to America and Israel: "I see the solution to lie in this tyrannical government being removed, for the crime of violating the ordinances of Islam and trampling the constitution, and in a government taking its place that adheres to Islam and has concern for the Iranian nation" (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, I, p. 27). He also decreed that the Nauruz celebrations for the Iranian year 1342 (which fell on March 21, 1963) be cancelled as a sign of protest against government policies.

The very next day, paratroopers were sent to the Fayziya madrasa in Qum, the site where the Imam delivered his public speeches. They killed a number of students, beat and arrested a number of others, and ransacked the building. Unintimidated, the Imam continued his attacks on the regime. On April 1, he denounced the persistent silence of certain apolitical 'ulama' as "tantamount to collaboration with the tyrannical regime," and one day later proclaimed political neutrality under the guise of taqiya to be haram (*Kauthar*, I, p. 67; *Sahifa-yi Nur*, I, p. 39). When the Shah sent his emissaries to the houses of the 'ulama' in Qum to threaten them with the destruction of their homes, the Imam reacted contemptuously by referring to the Shah as "that little man (mardak)." Then, on April 3, 1963, the fortieth day after the attack on the Fayziya madrasa, he described the Iranian government as being determined to eradicate Islam at the behest of America and Israel and himself as resolved to combat it.

Confrontation turned to insurrection some two months later. The beginning of Muharram, always a time of heightened religious awareness and sensitivity, saw demonstrators in Tehran carrying pictures of the Imam and denouncing the Shah in front of his own palace. On the

afternoon of 'Ashura (June 3, 1963), Imam Khomeini delivered a speech at the Fayziya madrasa in which he drew parallels between the Umayyad caliph Yazid and the Shah and warned the Shah that if he did not change his ways the day would come when the people would offer up thanks for his departure from the country (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, I, p. 46). This warning was remarkably prescient, for on January 16, 1979, the Shah was indeed obliged to leave Iran amidst scenes of popular rejoicing. The immediate effect of the Imam's speech was, however, his arrest two days later at 3 o'clock in the morning by a group of commandos who hastily transferred him to the Qasr prison in Tehran.

As dawn broke on June 3, the news of his arrest spread first through Qum and then to other cities. In Qum, Tehran, Shiraz, Mashhad and Varamin, masses of angry demonstrators were confronted by tanks and ruthlessly slaughtered. It was not until six days later that order was fully restored. This uprising of 15 Khurdad 1342 (the day in the Iranian calendar on which it began) marked a turning point in Iranian history. Henceforth the repressive and dictatorial nature of the Shah's regime, reinforced by the unwavering support of the United States, was constantly intensified, and with it the prestige of Imam Khomeini as the only figure of note - whether religious or secular - willing to challenge him. The arrogance imbuing the Shah's policies also caused a growing number of the 'ulama' to abandon their quietism and align themselves with the radical goals set forth by the Imam. The movement of 15 Khurdad may therefore be characterized as the prelude to the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79; the goals of that revolution and its leadership had already been determined.

After nineteen days in the Qasr prison, Imam Khomeini was moved first to the 'Ishratabad military base and then to a house in the Davudiya section of Tehran where he was kept under surveillance. Despite the killings that had taken place during the uprising, mass demonstrations were held in Tehran and elsewhere demanding his release, and some of his colleagues came to the capital from Qum to lend their support to the demand. It was not, however, until April 7, 1964 that he was released, no doubt on the assumption that imprisonment had tempered his views and that the movement he had led would quietly subside. Three days after his release and return to Qum, he dispelled such illusions by refuting officially inspired rumors that he had come to an understanding with the Shah's regime and by declaring that the movement inaugurated on 15 Khurdad would continue. Aware of the persisting differences in approach between the Imam and some of the other senior religious

scholars, the regime had also attempted to discredit him by creating dissension in Qum.

These attempts, too, were unsuccessful, for early in June 1964 all the major 'ulama' put their signatures to declarations commemorating the first anniversary of the uprising of 15 Khurdad. Despite its failure to sideline or silence Imam Khomeini, the Shah's regime continued its pro-American policies unwaveringly. In the autumn of 1964, it concluded a status of forces agreement with the United States that provided immunity from prosecution for all American personnel in Iran and their dependents. This occasioned the Imam to deliver what was perhaps the most vehement speech of the entire struggle against the Shah; certainly one of his close associates, Ayatullah Muhammad Mufattih, had never seen him so agitated (*Interview with the present writer, Tehran, December 1979*). He denounced the agreement as a surrender of Iranian independence and sovereignty, made in exchange for a \$200 million loan that would be of benefit only to the Shah and his associates, and described as traitors all those in the Majlis who voted in favor of it; the government lacked all legitimacy, he concluded (*Kauthar, I, pp. 169-178*).

Shortly before dawn on November 4, 1964, again a detachment of commandos surrounded the Imam's house in Qum, arrested him, and this time took him directly to Mehrabad airport in Tehran for immediate banishment to Turkey. The decision to deport rather than arrest Imam Khomeini and imprison him in Iran was based no doubt on the hope that in exile he would fade from popular memory. Physical elimination would have been fraught with the danger of an uncontrollable popular uprising. As for the choice of Turkey, this reflected the security co-operation existing between the Shah's regime and Turkey.

The Imam was first lodged in room 514 of Bulvar Palas Oteli in Ankara, a moderately comfortable hotel in the Turkish capital, under the joint surveillance of Iranian and Turkish security officials. On November 12, he was moved from Ankara to Bursa, where he was to reside another eleven months. The stay in Turkey cannot have been congenial, for Turkish law forbade Imam Khomeini to wear the cloak and turban of the Muslim scholar, an identity which was integral to his being; the sole photographs in existence to show him bareheaded all belong to the period of exile in Turkey (*See Ansari, Hadis-I Bidari, p. 67*). However, on December 3, 1964, he was joined in Bursa by his eldest son, Hajj Mustafa Khumayni; he was also permitted to receive occasional visitors from Iran, and was supplied with a number of books on fiqh. He made use of his forced stay in Bursa to compile Tahrir al-Wasila, a two-volume

compendium on questions of jurisprudence. Important and distinctive are the fatvas this volume contains, grouped under the headings of *al-amr bi 'l-ma'ruf wa 'l-nahy 'an almunkar and difa'*.

The Imam decrees, for example, that "if it is feared that the political and economic domination (by foreigners) over an Islamic land will lead to the enslavement and weakening of the Muslims, then such domination must be repelled by appropriate means, including passive resistance, the boycott of foreign goods, and the abandonment of all dealings and association with the foreigners in question. Similarly, "if an attack by foreigners on one of the Islamic states is anticipated, it is incumbent on all Islamic states to repel the attack by all possible means; indeed, this is incumbent on the Muslims as a whole" (*Tahrir al-Wasila*, I, p. 486).

On September 5, 1965, Imam Khomeini left Turkey for Najaf in Iraq, where he was destined to spend thirteen years. As a traditional center of Shi'i learning and pilgrimage, Najaf was clearly a preferable and more congenial place of exile. It had, moreover, already functioned as a stronghold of 'ulama' opposition to the Iranian monarchy during the Constitutional Revolution of 1906-1909. But it was not in order to accommodate the Imam that the Shah arranged for his transfer to Najaf. First, there was continuing disquiet among the Imam's followers at his forced residence in Bursa, away from the traditional milieu of the Shi'i madrasa; such objections could be met by moving him to Najaf. Second, it was hoped that once in Najaf, the Imam would either be overshadowed by the prestigious 'ulama' there, men such as Ayatullah Abu 'l-Qasim Khu'i (d. 1995), or that he would challenge their distaste for political activism and squander his energies on confronting them. He skirted this dual danger by proffering them his respect while continuing to pursue the goals he had set himself before leaving Iran. Another pitfall he avoided was association with the Iraqi government which occasionally had its own differences with the Shah's regime and was of a mind to use the Imam's presence in Najaf for its own purposes.

The Imam declined the opportunity to be interviewed on Iraqi television soon after his arrival, and resolutely kept his distance from succeeding Iraqi administrations. Once settled in Najaf, Imam Khomeini began teaching fiqh at the Shaykh Murtaza Ansari madrasa. His lectures were well attended, by students not only from Iran but also from Iraq, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Persian Gulf states. In fact, a mass migration to Najaf from Qum and other centers of religious learning in Iran

was proposed to the Imam, but he advised against it as a measure bound to depopulate Qum and weaken it as a center of religious guidance.

It was also at the Shaykh Murtaza Ansari madrasa that he delivered, between January 21 and February 8, 1970, his celebrated lectures on vilayat-i faqih, the theory of governance that was to be implemented after the triumph of the Islamic Revolution. (The text of these lectures was published in Najaf, not long after their delivery, under the title *Vilayat-i Faqih ya Hukumat-i Islami* ; a slightly abbreviated Arabic translation soon followed). This theory, which may be summarized as the assumption by suitably qualified 'ulama' of the political and juridical functions of the Twelfth Imam during his occultation, had already been put forward, somewhat tentatively, in his first published work, *Kashf al-Asrar*. Now he presented it as the self-evident and incontestable consequence of the Shi'i doctrine of the Imamate, citing and analyzing in support of it all relevant texts from the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (s.a.w.s) and the Twelve Imams (a.s.) He emphasized also the harm that had come to Iran (as well as other Muslim countries) from abandoning Islamic law and government and relinquishing the political realm to the enemies of Islam. Finally, he delineated a program for the establishment of an Islamic government, laying particular stress on the responsibilities of the 'ulama' to transcend their petty concerns and to address the people fearlessly: "It is the duty of all of us to overthrow the taghut, the illegitimate political powers that now rule the entire Islamic world" (*Vilayat-i Faqih, Najaf, n.d., p. 204*).

The text of the lectures on vilayat-i faqih was smuggled back to Iran by visitors who came to see the Imam in Najaf, as well as by ordinary Iranians who came on pilgrimage to the shrine of Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) The same channels were used to convey to Iran the numerous letters and proclamations in which the Imam commented on the events that took place in his homeland during the long years of exile. The first such document, a letter to the Iranian 'ulama' assuring them of the ultimate downfall of the Shah's regime, is dated April 16, 1967. On the same day he also wrote to prime minister Amir 'Abbas Huvayda accusing him of running "a regime of terror and thievery" (*Sahifa-yi Nur, I, pp. 129,132*).

On the occasion of the Six Day War in June 1967, the Imam issued a declaration forbidding any type of dealing with Israel as well as the consumption of Israeli goods. This declaration was widely and openly publicized in Iran, which led to the ransacking of Imam Khomeini's house in

Qum and the arrest of Hajj Sayyid Ahmad Khumayni, his second son, who had been living there. (Some of the unpublished works of the Imam were lost or destroyed on this occasion). It was also at this time that the Shah's regime contemplated moving the Imam from Iraq to India, a location from which communications with Iran would have been far more difficult, but the plan was thwarted. Other developments on which the Imam commented from Najaf were the extravagant celebrations of 2500 years of Iranian monarchy in October 1971 ("it is the duty of the Iranian people to refrain from participation in this illegitimate festival"); the formal establishment of a one-party system in Iran in February 1975 (the Imam prohibited membership in the party, the Hizb-i Rastakhiz, in a fatva issued the following month); and the substitution, in the same month, of the imperial (shahanshahi) calendar for the solar Hijri calendar that had been official in Iran until that time. Some developments were met with fatvas rather than proclamations: for example, the Imam rejected as incompatible with Islam the Family Protection Law of 1967 and classified as adultresses women who remarried after obtaining a divorce under its provisions (*Imam Khomeini, Risala-yi Ahkam*, p. 328).

Imam Khomeini had also to deal with changing circumstances in Iraq. The Ba'th Party, fundamentally hostile to religion, had come to power in July 1967 and soon began exerting pressure on the scholars of Najaf, both Iraqi and Iranian. In 1971, as Iraq and Iran entered a state of sporadic and undeclared war with each other, the Iraqi regime began expelling from its territory Iranians whose forebears had in some cases been residing there for generations. The Imam, who until that point had scrupulously kept his distance from Iraqi officialdom, now addressed himself directly to the Iraqi leadership condemning its actions. Imam Khomeini was, in fact, constantly and acutely aware of the connections between Iranian affairs and those of the Muslim world in general and the Arab lands in particular. This awareness led him to issue from Najaf a proclamation to the Muslims of the world on the occasion of the hajj in 1971, and to comment, with special frequency and emphasis, on the problems posed by Israel for the Muslim world.

The Imam's strong concern for the Palestine question led him to issue a fatva on August 27, 1968 authorizing the use of religious monies (*vujuh-i shar'i*) to support the nascent activities of al-'Asifa, the armed wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization; this was confirmed by a similar and more detailed ruling issued after a meeting with the Baghdad representative of the PLO (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, I, pp. 144-5).

The distribution in Iran, on however limited a scale, of the proclamations and fatwas of Imam Khomeini was in itself enough to ensure that his name not be forgotten during the years of exile. Equally important, the movement of Islamic opposition to the Shah's regime that had been inaugurated by the uprising of 15 Khurdad continued to develop despite the brutality unhesitatingly dispensed by the Shah. Numerous groups and individuals explicitly owed their allegiance to the Imam. Soon after his exiling there came into being an organization called Hay'atha-yi Mu'talifa-yi Islami (the Allied Islamic Associations), headquartered in Tehran but with branches throughout Iran. Active in it were many who had been students of the Imam in Qum and who came to assume important responsibilities after the revolution, men such as Hashimi-Rafsanjani and Javad Bahonar.

In January 1965, four members of the organization assassinated Hasan 'Ali Mansur, the prime minister who had been responsible for the exiling of the Imam. There were no individuals designated, even clandestinely, as Imam Khomeini's authorized representatives in Iran while he was in exile. However, senior 'ulama' such as Ayatullah Murtaza Mutahhari, Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Bihishti (d. 1981), and Ayatullah Husayn 'Ali Muntaziri, were in contact with him, directly and indirectly, and were known to speak on his behalf in important matters. Like their younger counterparts in the Hay'atha-yi Mu'talafa-yi Islami, all three went on to perform important functions during and after the revolution.

The continued growth of the Islamic movement during Imam Khomeini's exile should not be attributed exclusively to his abiding influence or to the activity of 'ulama' associated with him. Important, too, were the lectures and books of 'Ali Shari'ati (d. 1977), a university-educated intellectual whose understanding and presentation of Islam were influenced by Western ideologies, including Marxism, to a degree that many 'ulama' regarded as dangerously syncretistic. When the Imam was asked to comment on the theories of Shari'ati, both by those who supported them and by those who opposed them, he discreetly refrained from doing so, in order not to create a division within the Islamic movement that would have benefited the Shah's regime. The most visible sign of the persisting popularity of Imam Khomeini in the pre-revolutionary years, above all at the heart of the religious institution in Qum, came in June 1975 on the anniversary of the uprising of 15 Khurdad. Students at the Fayziya madrasa began holding a demonstration within the confines of the building, and a sympathetic crowd assembled outside. Both

gatherings continued for three days until they were attacked on the ground by commandos and from the air by a military helicopter, with numerous deaths resulting. The Imam reacted with a message in which he declared the events in Qum and similar disturbances elsewhere to be a sign of hope that "freedom and liberation from the bonds of imperialism" were at hand (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, I, p. 215). The beginning of the revolution came indeed some two and a half years later.

[5] The Islamic Revolution, 1978-79

The chain of events that ended in February 1979 with the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime and the foundation of the Islamic Republic began with the death in Najaf on October 23, 1977 of Hajj Sayyid Mustafa Khomeini, unexpectedly and under mysterious circumstances. This death was widely attributed to the Iranian security police, SAVAK, and protest meetings took place in Qum, Tehran, Yazd, Mashhad, Shiraz, and Tabriz. Imam Khomeini himself, with the equanimity he customarily displayed in the face of personal loss, described the death of his son as one of the "hidden favors" (*altaf-i khafiya*) of God, and advised the Muslims of Iran to show fortitude and hope (*Shahidi digar az ruhaniyat, Najaf, n.d., p. 27*).

The esteem in which Imam Khomeini was held and the reckless determination of the Shah's regime to undermine that esteem were demonstrated once again on January 7, 1978 when an article appeared in the semi-official newspaper *Ittila'at* attacking him in scurrilous terms as a traitor working together with foreign enemies of the country. The next day a furious mass protest took place in Qum; it was suppressed by the security forces with heavy loss of life. This was the first in a series of popular confrontations that, gathering momentum throughout 1978, soon turned into a vast revolutionary movement, demanding the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime and the installation of an Islamic government.

The martyrs of Qum were commemorated forty days later with demonstrations and shop closures in every major city of Iran. Particularly grave were the disturbances in Tabriz, which ended only after more than 100 people had been killed by the Shah's troops. On March 29, the fortieth day after the killings in Tabriz was marked by a further round of demonstrations, in some fifty-five Iranian cities; this time the heaviest casualties occurred in Yazd, where security forces

opened fire on a gathering in the main mosque. In early May, it was Tehran itself that saw the principal violence; armored columns appeared on the streets for the first time since June 1963 in order to contain the trend to revolution. In June, the Shah found it politic to make a number of superficial concessions - such as the repeal of the "imperial calendar" - to the forces opposing him, but repression also continued. When the government lost control of Isfahan on August 17, the army assaulted the city and killed hundreds of unarmed demonstrators. Two days later, 410 people were burned to death behind the locked doors of a cinema in Abadan, and the government was plausibly held responsible.

On 'Id al-fitr, which that year fell on September 4, marches took place in all major cities, with an estimated total of four million participants. The demand was loudly voiced for the abolition of monarchy and the foundation of an Islamic government under the leadership of Imam Khomeini.

Faced with the mounting tide of revolution, the Shah decreed martial law and forbade further demonstrations. On September 9, a crowd gathered at the Maydan-I Zhala (subsequently renamed Maydan-I Shuhada') in Tehran was attacked by troops that had blocked all exits from the square, and some 2000 people were killed at this location alone. Another 2000 were killed elsewhere in Tehran by American-supplied military helicopters hovering overhead. This day of massacre, which came to be known as Black Friday, marked the point of no return. Too much blood had been spilt for the Shah to have any hope of survival, and the army itself began to tire of the task of slaughter.

As these events were unfolding in Iran, Imam Khomeini delivered a whole series of messages and speeches which reached his homeland not only in printed form but also increasingly on tape cassettes. His voice could be heard congratulating the people for their sacrifices, denouncing the Shah in categorical fashion as a criminal, and underlining the responsibility of the United States for the killings and the repression. (Ironically, US President Carter had visited Tehran on New Year's Eve 1977 and lauded the Shah for creating "an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world" (*New York Times*, January 2, 1978). As the fade of stability dissolved, the United States continued its military and political support of the Shah uninterrupted by anything but the most superficial hesitation). Most importantly, the Imam recognized that a unique juncture had been reached in Iranian history, that a genuinely revolutionary momentum had come into being which if dissipated would be impossible to rebuild. He therefore warned against any

tendency to compromise or to be deceived by the sporadic conciliatory gestures of the Shah.

Thus on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr, when mass demonstrations had passed off with deceptive peacefulness in Tehran, he issued the following declaration: "Noble people of Iran ! Press forward with your movement and do not slacken for a minute, as I know full well you will not! Let no one imagine that after the blessed month of Ramadan his God-given duties have changed. These demonstrations that break down tyranny and advance the goals of Islam are a form of worship that is not confined to certain months or days, for the aim is to save the nation, to enact Islamic justice, and to establish a form of divine government based on justice" (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, I, p. 97).

In one of the numerous miscalculations that marked his attempts to destroy the revolution, the Shah decided to seek the deportation of Imam Khomeini from Iraq, on the assumption, no doubt, that once removed from the prestigious location of Najaf and its proximity to Iran, his voice would somehow be silenced. The agreement of the Iraqi government was obtained at a meeting between the Iraqi and Iranian foreign ministers in New York, and on September 24, 1978, the Imam's house in Najaf was surrounded by troops. He was informed that his continued residence in Iraq was contingent on his abandoning political activity, a condition he was sure to reject. On October 3, he left Iraq for Kuwait, but was refused entry at the border. After a period of hesitation in which Algeria, Lebanon and Syria were considered as possible destinations, Imam Khomeini embarked for Paris, on the advice of his second son, Hajj Sayyid Ahmad Khomeini, who by now had joined him.

Once arrived in Paris, the Imam took up residence in the suburb of Neauphle-le-Chateau in a house that had been rented for him by Iranian exiles in France. Residence in a non-Muslim land was no doubt experienced by Imam Khomeini as irksome, and in the declaration he issued from Neauphle-le-Chateau on October 11, 1978, the fortieth day after the massacres of Black Friday, he announced his intention of moving to any Muslim country that assured him freedom of speech (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, II, p. 143). No such assurance ever materialized. In addition, his forced removal from Najaf increased popular anger in Iran still further. It was, however, the Shah's regime that turned out to be the ultimate loser from this move. Telephonic communications with Tehran were far easier from Paris than they had been from Najaf, thanks to the Shah's determination to link Iran with the West in every possible way, and the messages and instructions the Imam issued flowed forth uninterrupted from the

modest command center he established in a small house opposite his residence. Moreover, a host of journalists from across the world now made their way to France, and the image and the words of the Imam soon became a daily feature in the world's media.

In Iran meanwhile, the Shah was continuously reshaping his government. First he brought in as prime minister Sharif-Imami, an individual supposedly close to conservative elements among the 'ulama. Then, on November 6, he formed a military government under General Ghulam-Riza Azhari, a move explicitly recommended by the United States. These political manœuvres had essentially no effect on the progress of the revolution. On November 23, one week before the beginning of Muharram, the Imam issued a declaration in which he likened the month to "a divine sword in the hands of the soldiers of Islam, our great religious leaders and respected preachers, and all the followers of Imam Husayn, sayyid al-shuhada'." They must, he continued, "make maximum use of it; trusting in the power of God, they must tear out the remaining roots of this tree of oppression and treachery." As for the military government, it was contrary to the shari'ah, and opposition to it a religious duty (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, III, p. 225).

Vast demonstrations unfurled across Iran as soon as Muharram began. Thousands of people donned white shrouds as a token of readiness for martyrdom and were cut down as they defied the nightly curfew. On Muharram 9, a million people marched in Tehran demanding the overthrow of the monarchy, and the following day, 'Ashura, more than two million demonstrators approved by acclamation a seventeen-point declaration of which the most important demand was the formation of an Islamic government headed by the Imam. Killings by the army continued, but military discipline began to crumble, and the revolution acquired an economic dimension with the proclamation of a national strike on December 18. With his regime crumbling, the Shah now attempted to coopt secular, liberal-nationalist politicians in order to forestall the foundation of an Islamic government. On January 3, 1979, Shahpur Bakhtiyar of the National Front (Jabha-yi Milli) was appointed prime minister to replace General Azhari, and plans were drawn up for the Shah to leave the country for what was advertised as a temporary absence. On January 12, the formation of a nine-member regency council was announced; headed by Jalal al-Din Tihirani, an individual proclaimed to have religious credentials, it was to represent the Shah's authority in his absence. None of these manœuvres distracted

the Imam from the goal now increasingly within reach. The very next day after the formation of the regency council, he proclaimed from Neauphle-le-Chateau the formation of the Council of the Islamic Revolution (Shaura-yi Inqilab-i Islami), a body entrusted with establishing a transitional government to replace the Bakhtiyar administration. On January 16, amid scenes of feverish popular rejoicing, the Shah left Iran for exile and death.

What remained now was to remove Bakhtiyar and prevent a military coup d'etat enabling the Shah to return. The first of these aims came closer to realization when Sayyid Jalal al-Din Tihrani came to Paris in order to seek a compromise with Imam Khomeini. He refused to see him until he resigned from the regency council and pronounced it illegal. As for the military, the gap between senior generals, unconditionally loyal to the Shah, and the growing number of officers and recruits sympathetic to the revolution, was constantly growing. When the United States dispatched General Huyser, commander of NATO land forces in Europe, to investigate the possibility of a military coup, he was obliged to report that it was pointless even to consider such a step. Conditions now seemed appropriate for Imam Khomeini to return to Iran and preside over the final stages of the revolution. After a series of delays, including the military occupation of Mehrabad airport from January 24 to 30, the Imam embarked on a chartered airliner of Air France on the evening of January 31 and arrived in Tehran the following morning. Amid unparalleled scenes of popular joy - it has been estimated that more than ten million people gathered in Tehran to welcome the Imam back to his homeland - he proceeded to the cemetery of Bihisht-i Zahra to the south of Tehran where the martyrs of the revolution lay buried. There he decried the Bakhtiyar administration as the "last feeble gasp of the Shah's regime" and declared his intention of appointing a government that would "punch Bakhtiyar's government in the mouth." (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, IV, pp. 281-

6). The appointment of the provisional Islamic government the Imam had promised came on

February 5. Its leadership was entrusted to Mahdi Bazargan, an individual who had been active for many years in various Islamic organizations, most notably the Freedom Movement (Nahzat-i Azadi).

The decisive confrontation came less than a week later. Faced with the progressive disintegration of the armed forces and the desertion of many

officers and men, together with their weapons, to the Revolutionary Committees that were springing up everywhere, Bakhtiyar decreed a curfew in Tehran to take effect at 4 p.m. On February 10, Imam Khomeini ordered that the curfew should be defied and warned that if elements in the army loyal to the Shah did not desist from killing the people, he would issue a formal fatva for jihad (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, V, p. 75). The following day the Supreme Military Council withdrew its support from Bakhtiyar, and on February 12, 1979, all organs of the regime, political, administrative, and military, finally collapsed.

The revolution had triumphed. Clearly no revolution can be regarded as the work of a single man, nor can its causes be interpreted in purely ideological terms; economic and social developments had helped to prepare the ground for the revolutionary movement of 1978-79. There was also marginal involvement in the revolution, particularly during its final stages when its triumph seemed assured, by secular, liberal-nationalist, and leftist elements. But there can be no doubting the centrality of Imam Khomeini's role and the integrally Islamic nature of the revolution he led. Physically removed from his countrymen for fourteen years, he had an unfailing sense of the revolutionary potential that had surfaced and was able to mobilize the broad masses of the Iranian people for the attainment of what seemed to many inside the country (including his chosen premier, Bazargan) a distant and excessively ambitious goal.

His role pertained, moreover, not merely to moral inspiration and symbolic leadership; he was also the operational leader of the revolution. Occasionally he accepted advice on details of strategy from persons in Iran, but he took all key decisions himself, silencing early on all advocates of compromise with the Shah. It was the mosques that were the organizational units of the revolution and mass prayers, demonstrations and martyrdom that were - until the very last stage - its principal weapons.

[6] 1979-89: first decade of the Islamic Republic, last decade of the Imam's life

Imam Khomeini's role was also central in shaping the new political order that emerged from the revolution, the Islamic Republic of Iran. At first it appeared that he might exercise his directive role from Qum, for he moved there from Tehran on February 29, causing Qum to become in effect a second capital of Iran. On March 30 and 31, a nationwide referendum resulted in a massive vote in favor of the establishment of an

Islamic Republic. The Imam proclaimed the next day, April 1, 1979, as the "first day of God's government" (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, V, p. 233). The institutionalization of the new order continued with the election, on August 3, of an Assembly of Experts (Majlis-I Khubragan), entrusted with the task of reviewing a draft constitution that had been put forward on June 18; fifty-five of the seventy-three persons elected were religious scholars.

It was not however to be expected that a smooth transition from the old regime would prove possible. The powers and duties of the Council of the Islamic Revolutionary, which was intended to serve as an interim legislature, were not clearly delineated from those of the provisional government headed by Bazargan. More importantly, significant differences of outlook and approach separated the two bodies from each other. The council, composed predominantly of 'ulama', favored immediate and radical change and sought to strengthen the revolutionary organs that had come into being - the revolutionary committees, the revolutionary courts charged with punishing members of the former regime charged with serious crimes, and the Corps of Guards of the Islamic Revolution (Sipah-I Pasdaran-I Inqilab-I Islami), established on May 5, 1979. The government, headed by Bazargan and comprising mainly liberal technocrats of Islamic orientation, sought as swift a normalization of the situation as possible and the gradual phasing out of the revolutionary institutions.

Although Imam Khomeini encouraged members of the two bodies to cooperate and refrained, on most occasions, from arbitrating their differences, his sympathies were clearly with the Council of the Islamic Revolution. On July 1, Bazargan offered the Imam his resignation. It was refused, and four members of the council - Rafsanjani, Bahunar, Mahdavi-Kani, and Ayatullah Sayyid 'Ali Khamna'i - joined Bazargan's cabinet in an effort to improve the coordination of the two bodies. In addition to these frictions at the governmental level, a further element of instability was provided by the terrorist activities of shadowy groups that were determined to rob the nascent Islamic republic of some of its most capable personalities. Thus on May 1, 1979, Ayatullah Murtaza Mutahhari, a leading member of the Council of the Islamic Revolution and a former pupil close to the Imam's heart, was assassinated in Tehran. For once, the Imam wept in an open display of grief. The final break between Bazargan and the revolution came as a consequence of the occupation of the United States embassy in Tehran on November 4, 1979 by a coalition of students from the universities of Tehran. Despite declarations of willingness to "honor the will of the Iranian people" and its recognition of the

Islamic Republic, the American government had admitted the Shah to the United States on October 22, 1979.

The pretext was his need for medical treatment, but it was widely feared in Iran that his arrival in America, where large numbers of high-ranking officials of the previous regime had gathered, might be the prelude to an American-sponsored attempt to restore him to power, on the lines of the successful CIA coup of August 1953. The Shah's extradition to Iran was therefore demanded by the students occupying the embassy as a condition for their liberating the hostages they were holding there.

It is probable that the students had cleared their action in advance with close associates of Imam Khomeini, for he swiftly extended his protection to them, proclaiming their action "a greater revolution than the first" (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, X, p. 141). Two days later, he predicted that confronted by this "second revolution," America would be "unable to do a damned thing (Amrika hich ghalati namitavanad bukunad)" (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, X, p. 149). This prediction seemed extravagant to many in Iran, but a military expedition mounted by the United States on April 22, 1980 to rescue the American hostages and possibly, too, to attack sensitive sites in Tehran, came to an abrupt and humiliating end when the American gunships crashed into each other in a sandstorm near Tabas in south-eastern Iran. On April 7, the United States had formally broken diplomatic ties with Iran, a move welcomed by Imam Khomeini as an occasion of rejoicing for the Iranian nation (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, XII, p. 40). It was not until January 21, 1981 that the American hostages were finally released.

Two days after the occupation of the US embassy, Bazargan once again offered his resignation, and this time it was accepted. In addition, the provisional government was dissolved, and the Council of the Islamic Revolution temporarily assumed the task of running the country. This marked the definitive departure of Bazargan and like-minded individuals from the scene; henceforth the term "liberal" became a pejorative designation for those who questioned the fundamental tendencies of the revolution. In addition, the students occupying the embassy had access to extensive files the Americans had kept on various Iranian personalities who had frequented the embassy over the years; these documents were now published and discredited the personalities involved. Most importantly, the occupation of the embassy constituted a "second revolution" in that Iran now offered a unique example of defiance of the American superpower and became established for American policymakers as their principal adversary in the Middle East.

The enthusiasm aroused by the occupation of the embassy also helped to ensure a large turnout for the referendum that was held on December 2 and 3, 1979 to ratify the constitution that had been approved by the Assembly of Experts on November 15. The constitution, which was overwhelmingly approved, differed greatly from the original draft, above all through its inclusion of the principle of vilayat-i faqih as its basic and determining principle. Mentioned briefly in the preamble, it was spelled out in full in Article Five: "During the Occultation of the Lord of the Age (Sahib al-Zaman; i.e., the Twelfth Imam) the governance and leadership of the nation devolve upon the just and pious faqih who is acquainted with the circumstances of his age; courageous, resourceful, and possessed of administrative ability; and recognized and accepted as leader (rahbar) by the majority of the people. In the event that no faqih should be so recognized by the majority, the leader, or leadership council, composed of fuqaha' possessing the aforementioned qualifications, will assume these responsibilities." Article 109 specified the qualifications and attributes of the leader as "suitability with respect to learning and piety, as required for the functions of mufti and marja'." Article 110 listed his powers, which include supreme command of the armed forces, appointment of the head of the judiciary, signing the decree formalizing the election of the president of the republic, and - under certain conditions - dismissing him (*Qanun-i Asasi-yi Jumhuri-yi Islami-yi Iran, Tehran, 1370 Sh./1991, pp. 23-24, 53-58*).

These articles formed the constitutional basis for Imam Khomeini's leadership role. In addition, from July 1979 onwards, he had been appointing Imam Jum'a's for every major city, who not only delivered the Friday sermon but also acted as his personal representatives.

Most government institutions also had a representative of the Imam assigned to them. However, the ultimate source of his influence was his vast moral and spiritual prestige, which led to him being designated primarily as Imam, in the sense of one dispensing comprehensive leadership to the community (*Suggestions that the use of this title assimilated him to the Twelve Imams of Shi'i belief and hence attributed infallibility to him are groundless*).

On January 23, 1980, Imam Khomeini was brought from Qum to Tehran to receive treatment for a heart ailment. After thirty-nine days in hospital, he took up residence in the north Tehran suburb of Darband, and on April 22 he moved into a modest house in Jamaran, another

suburb to the north of the capital. A closely guarded compound grew up around the house, and it was there that he was destined to spend the rest of his life.

On January 25, during the Imam's hospitalization, Abu 'l-Hasan Bani Sadr, a French-educated economist, was elected first president of the Islamic Republic of Iran. His success had been made possible in part by the Imam's decision that it was not opportune to have a religious scholar stand for election. This event, followed on March 14 by the first elections to the Majlis, might have counted as a further step to the institutionalization and stabilization of the political system.

However, Bani Sadr's tenure, together with the tensions that soon arose between him and a majority of the deputies in the Majlis, occasioned a severe crisis that led ultimately to Bani Sadr's dismissal. For the president, his inherent megalomania aggravated by his victory at the polls, was reluctant to concede supremacy to Imam Khomeini, and he therefore attempted to build up a personal following, consisting largely of former leftists who owed their positions exclusively to him. In this enterprise, he inevitably clashed with the newly formed Islamic Republic Party (Hizb-i Jumhuri-yi Islami), headed by Ayatullah Bihishti, which dominated the Majlis and was loyal to what was referred to as "the line of the Imam" (khatt-i Imam). As he had earlier done with the disputes between the provisional government and the Council of the Islamic Revolution, the Imam sought to reconcile the parties, and on September 11 1980 appealed to all branches of government and their members to set aside their differences.

While this new governmental crisis was brewing, on September 22, 1980, Iraq sent its forces across the Iranian border and launched a war of aggression that was to last for almost eight years. Iraq enjoyed financial support in this venture from the Arab states lining the Persian Gulf, above all from Saudi Arabia. Imam Khomeini, however, correctly regarded the United States as the principal instigator of the war from the outset, and American involvement became increasingly visible as the war wore on. Although Iraq advanced territorial claims against Iran, the barely disguised purpose of the aggression was to take advantage of the dislocations caused in Iran by the revolution, particularly the weakening of the army through purges of disloyal officers, and to destroy the Islamic Republic. As he had done during the revolution, Imam Khomeini insisted on an uncompromising stance and inspired a steadfast resistance which prevented the easy Iraqi victory many foreign observers

had confidently foretold. Initially, however, Iraq enjoyed some success, capturing the port city of Khurramshahr and encircling Abadan.

The conduct of the war became one more issue at dispute between Bani Sadr and his opponents. Continuing his efforts at reconciling the factions, Imam Khomeini established a three-man commission to investigate the complaints each had against the other. The commission reported on June 1, 1981 that Bani Sadr was guilty of violating the constitution and contravening the Imam's instructions. He was accordingly declared incompetent by the Majlis to function as president, and the next day, in accordance with Article 110 section (e) of the constitution, Imam Khomeini dismissed him. He went into hiding, and on July 28 fled to Paris, disguised as a woman.

Toward the end of his presidency, Bani Sadr had allied himself with the Sazman-i Mujahidin-i Khalq (Organization of People's Strugglers; however, the group is commonly known in Iran as munafiqin, "hypocrites," not mujahidin, because of its members' hostility to the Islamic Republic). An organization with a tortuous ideological and political history, it had hoped, like Bani Sadr, to displace Imam Khomeini and capture power for itself. After Bani Sadr went into exile, members of the organization embarked on a campaign of assassinating government leaders in the hope that the Islamic Republic would collapse. Even before Bani Sadr fled, a massive explosion had destroyed the headquarters of the Islamic Republic Party, killing more than seventy people including Ayatullah Bihishti. On August 30, 1981, Muhammad 'Ali Raja'i, Bani Sadr's successor as president, was killed in another explosion. Other assassinations followed over the next two years, including five Imam Jum'a's as well as a host of lesser figures. Throughout these disasters, Imam Khomeini maintained his customary composure, declaring, for example, after the assassination of Raja'i that the killings would change nothing and in fact showed Iran to be "the most stable country in the world," given the ability of the government to continue functioning in an orderly manner (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, XV, p.130). The fact that Iran was able to withstand such blows internally while continuing the war of defense against Iraq was indeed testimony to the roots the new order had struck and to the undiminished prestige of Imam Khomeini as the leader of the nation. Ayatullah Khamna'i, a longtime associate and devotee of the Imam, was elected president on October 2, 1981, and he remained in this position until he succeeded him as leader of the Islamic Republic on his death in 1989. No governmental crises comparable to

those of the first years of the Islamic Republic occurred during his tenure.

Nonetheless, structural problems persisted. The constitution provided that legislation passed by the Majlis should be reviewed by a body of senior fuqaha' known as the Council of Guardians (Shaura-yi Nagahban) to ensure its conformity with the provisions of Ja'fari fiqh. This frequently led to a stalemate on a variety of important legislative issues. On at least two occasions, in October 1981 and January 1983, Hashimi-Rafsanjani, then chairman of the Majlis, requested the Imam to arbitrate decisively, drawing on the prerogatives inherent in the doctrine of vilayat-i faqih, in order to break the deadlock. He was reluctant to do so, always preferring that a consensus should emerge. However, on January 6, 1988, in a letter addressed to Khamna'i, the Imam put forward a far-reaching definition of vilayat-i faqih, now termed "absolute" (mutlaqa), which made it theoretically possible for the leadership to override all conceivable objections to the policies it supported.

Governance, Imam Khomeini proclaimed, is the most important of all divine ordinances (ahkam-i ilahi) and it takes precedence over secondary divine ordinances (ahkam-i far'iya-yi ilahiya). Not only does the Islamic state permissibly enforce a large number of laws not mentioned specifically in the sources of the shari'a, such as the prohibition of narcotics and the levying of customs dues; it can also suspend the performance of a fundamental religious duty, the hajj, when this is necessitated by the higher interest of the Muslims (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, XX, pp. 170-71). At first sight, the theory of vilayati mutlaqa-yi faqih might appear to be a justification for unlimited individual rule by the leader (rahbar). One month later, however, Imam Khomeini delegated these broadly defined prerogatives to a commission named the Assembly for the Determination of the Interest of the Islamic Order (Majma'-i Tashkhis-i Maslahat-i Nizam-i Islami). This standing body has the power to settle decisively all differences on legislation between the Majlis and the Council of Guardians.

The war against Iraq continued to preoccupy Iran until July 1988. Iran had come to define its war aims as not simply the liberation of all parts of its territory occupied by Iraq, but also the overthrow of the regime of Saddam Husayn. A number of military victories made this goal appear attainable. On November 29, 1981, Imam Khomeini congratulated his military commanders on successes achieved in Khuzistan, remarking that the Iraqis had been obliged to retreat before the faith of the Iranian troops and their eagerness for martyrdom (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, XV, p. 234). The following year, on May 24, Khurramshahr, which had been held by the

Iraqis since shortly after the outbreak of war, was liberated, and only small pockets of Iranian territory remained in Iraqi hands. The Imam marked the occasion by condemning anew the Persian Gulf states that supported Saddam Husayn and describing the victory as a divine gift (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, XVI, pp. 154-5). Iran failed, however, to follow up swiftly on its surprise victory and the momentum, which might have made possible the destruction of Saddam Husayn's regime, was lost as the tide of war flowed back and forth. The United States was, in any event, determined to deny Iran a decisive victory and stepped up its intervention in the conflict in a variety of ways. Finally, on July 2, 1988, the US navy stationed in the Persian Gulf shot down a civilian Iranian airliner, with the loss of 290 passengers. With the utmost reluctance, Imam Khomeini agreed to end the war on the terms specified in Resolution 598 of the United Nations Security Council, comparing his decision in a lengthy statement issued on July 20 to the drinking of poison (*Sahifa-yi Nur*, XXI, pp. 227-44).

Any notion that the acceptance of a ceasefire with Iraq signaled a diminution in the Imam's readiness to confront the enemies of Islam was dispelled when, on February 14, 1989, he issued a fatva calling for the execution of Salman Rushdie, author of the obscene and blasphemous novel, *The Satanic Verses*, as well as those responsible for the publication and dissemination of the work. The fatva received a great deal of support in the Muslim world as the most authoritative articulation of popular outrage at Rushdie's gross insult to Islam. Although its demand remained unfulfilled, it demonstrated plainly the consequences that would have to be faced by any aspiring imitator of Rushdie, and thus had an important deterrent effect. Generally overlooked at the time was the firm grounding of the Imam's fatva in the existing provisions of both Shi'i and Sunni jurisprudence; it was not therefore innovative. What lent the fatva particular significance was rather its issuance by the Imam as a figure of great moral authority.

The Imam had also gained the attention of the outside world, albeit in a less spectacular way, on January 4, 1989, when he sent Mikhail Gorbachev, then general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, a letter in which he predicted the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disappearance of communism: "Henceforth it will be necessary to look for communism in the museums of political history of the world." He also warned Gorbachev and the Russian people against replacing communism with Western-style materialism: "The basic problem of your

country has nothing to do with ownership, the economy, or freedom; it is the lack of a true belief in God, the same problem that has drawn the West into a blind alley of triviality and purposelessness" (*Avayi Tauhid, Tehran, 1367 Sh./1989, pp. 3-5*).

Internally, however, the most important development in the last year of Imam Khomeini's life was, without doubt, his dismissal of Ayatullah Muntaziri from the position of successor to the leadership of the Islamic Republic. Once a student and close associate of the Imam, who had gone so far as to call him "the fruit of my life," Muntaziri had had among his associates over the years persons executed for counterrevolutionary activity, including a son-in-law, Mahdi Hashimi, and made farreaching criticisms of the Islamic Republic, particularly with regard to judicial matters. On July 31, 1988, he wrote a letter to the Imam questioning what he regarded as unjustified executions of members of the Sazman-i Mujahidin-i Khalq held in Iranian prisons after the organization, from its base in Iraq, had made a large-scale incursion into Iranian territory in the closing stages of the Iran- Iraq war. Matters came to a head the following year, and on March 28, 1989, the Imam wrote to Muntaziri accepting his resignation from the succession, a resignation which under the circumstances he was compelled to offer (*Sahifa-yi Nur, XXI, p. 112*).

Funeral

On June 3, 1989, after eleven days in hospital for an operation to stop internal bleeding, Imam Khomeini lapsed into a critical condition and died. The outpouring of grief was massive and spontaneous, the exact counterpoint to the vast demonstrations of joy that had greeted his return to Iran a little over ten years earlier. Such was the press of mourners, estimated at some nine million, that the body ultimately had to be transported by helicopter to its place of burial to the south of Tehran on the road leading to Qum. A still expanding complex of structures has grown up around the shrine of the Imam, making it likely that it will become the center of an entire new city devoted to ziyara and religious learning.

The testament of Imam Khomeini was published soon after his death. A lengthy document, it addresses itself principally to the various classes of Iranian society, urging them to do whatever is necessary for the preservation and strengthening of the Islamic Republic. Significantly, however, it begins with an extended meditation on the hadith-i

thaqalayn: "I leave among you two great and precious things: the Book of God and my progeny; they will never be separated from each other until they meet me at the pool." The Imam interprets the misfortunes that have befallen Muslims throughout history and more particularly in the present age as the result of efforts precisely to disengage the Qur'an from the progeny of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.)

The legacy of Imam Khomeini was considerable. He had bequeathed to Iran not only a political system enshrining the principles both of religious leadership and of an elected legislature and head of the executive branch, but also a whole new ethos and self-image, a dignified stance of independence vis-vis the West rare in the Muslim world. He was deeply imbued with the traditions and worldview of Shi'i Islam, but he viewed the revolution he had led and the republic he had founded as the nucleus for a worldwide awakening of all Muslims. He had sought to attain this goal by, among other things, issuing proclamations to the hujjaj on a number of occasions and alerting them to the dangers arising from American dominance of the Middle East, the tireless activity of Israel for subverting the Muslim world, and the subservience to America and Israel of numerous Middle Eastern governments. Unity between Shi'is and Sunnis was one of his lasting concerns; he was, indeed, the first Shi'i authority to declare unconditionally valid prayers performed by Shi'is behind a Sunni imam (*Istifta'at*, I, p. 279).

It must finally be stressed that despite the amplitude of his political achievements, Imam Khomeini's personality was essentially that of a gnostic for whom political activity was but the natural outgrowth of an intense inner life of devotion. The comprehensive vision of Islam that he both articulated and exemplified is, indeed, his most significant legacy.

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[b] Works on fiqh

[c] On Islamic government

[d] Proclamations, speeches, messages and letters Testament

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[8] About the author

English-born Hamid Algar received his Ph.D. in oriental studies from Cambridge. Since 1965 he has served on the faculty of the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, where he teaches Persian and Islamic history and philosophy. Dr Algar has written extensively on the subject of Iran and Islam, including the books Religion and State in Iran, 1785- 1906 and Mirza Malkum Khan: A Biographical Study in Iranian Modernism. He has been following the Islamic movement in Iran with interest for many years. In an article published in 1972, he assessed the situation there and forecast the Revolution "more

accurately than all the U.S. government's political officers and intelligence analysts," in the words of Nicholas Wade, Science magazine. Dr. Algar has translated numerous books from Arabic, Turkish, and Persian, including the book "Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini".

(83 Stories - Biography (1902-1989)
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Chapter 2

Al-Allamah al-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn at-Tabataba'i - (1904-1981)

Al-Allamah al-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn at-Tabataba'i (1892-1981) is one of the greatest and the most original thinkers of the contemporary Muslim world. He was a prolific writer and an inspiring teacher, who devoted whole of his life to Islamic studies. His interests were varied and the scope of his learning was vast. His books number about forty-four, three of which are collections of his articles on various aspects of Islam and the Qur'an. His major contributions are in the fields of tafsir, philosophy and history of the Shi'ah faith. In philosophy the most important of his works is *Usul-e falsafah wa rawish-e-riyalism* (The Principles of Philosophy and the method of realism), which has been published in five volumes with explanatory notes and commentary of Martyr Murtadha Mutahhari. It deals with the Islamic outlook of the world, which is not only opposed to idealism that negates the reality of the corporeal world, but is also opposed to the materialistic conception of the world, which reduces all reality to ambiguous materialistic myths and fabrications. The point is established that while the Islamic world-outlook is realistic, both the idealistic and materialistic outlooks are unrealistic. His other major philosophical work is a voluminous commentary of al-Asfar al-'arba'ah, the magnum opus of Mulla Sadra, the last of the great Muslim thinkers of the medieval age. Besides these, he wrote extensively on philosophical issues. His humanist approach is underlined by his three books on man - before the world, in this world and after this world. His philosophy is overloaded with sociological treatment of human problems. His two other works, *Bidayat al-hikmah* and *Nihayat al-hikmah*, are considered among works of a high order in Muslim philosophy.

He wrote several treatises on the doctrines and history of the Shi'ah. One of these books comprises his clarifications and expositions about Shi'ah faith in reply to the questions posed by the famous French orientalist Henry Corbin. Another of his books on this topic *Shi'ah dar Islam*

was translated into English by Sayyid Husayn Nasr under the title *The Shi'ite Islam*. These books serve as a good means of removing popular misconceptions about the Shi'ah and can pave the way for a better inter-sectarian understanding among Muslim schools.

If a single work is to be named as his masterpiece, *al-Mizan* can be mentioned without hesitation, which is the outcome of the 'Allamah's lifelong labor in the sphere of Qur'anic studies. His method, style and approach are uniquely different from those of all other exegetes of the Qur'an.

Among the aspects of 'Allamah Tabataba'i's personality is his unprecedented success as a great teacher. Among his pupils we find a group of such luminaries and thinkers of eminence in their own right as Martyr Murtada Mutahhari, Martyr Beheshti, Hasan Hasanzadeh Amuli and Husayn Nasr.

The 'Allamah was also a good poet. He composed the poetry mainly in Persian, but occasionally in Arabic also.

The History of Al-Mizan:

'Allamah Tabataba'i, who came to the Hawzah of Qum in 1325 A.H., wrote and lectured extensively on different branches of Islamic sciences. Commentary and exegesis of the Qur'an was one of the topics of his discussions, which he held with the scholars and students of the Howzeh-ye 'Ilmiyyah of Qum. About the motive of writing *al-Mizan*, 'Allamah Tabataba'i himself states that when he came to Qum from Tabriz, he tried to evaluate the requirements of the Islamic society as well as the conditions prevailing in the Howzeh-ye 'Ilmiyyah of Qum, and after due consideration of the matter he came to the conclusion that the school was badly in need of a commentary of the Qur'an for a better understanding and more effective instruction of the sublime meanings of the purest of all Islamic texts and the highest of all Divine gifts. On the other hand, since materialistic notions were gaining prevalence, there was a great need for a rational and philosophical discourse to enable the Howzah to rise to the occasion for elaborating the intellectual and doctrinal principles of Islam with the help of rational arguments in order to defend the Islamic position. He thus considered it his duty to make efforts in fulfilling these two urgent needs with the help of God., the Most High. The lectures on exegesis of the Qur'an were planned according to this scheme. Perhaps 'Allamah Tabataba'i might have delivered lectures on the entire Qur'an for his students for several times, and in the meanwhile he might have written a commentary. During these sessions of well-

thought out discourse he might have rendered these lectures into his terse and eloquent prose, which was later printed in a number of volumes.

The first edition of al-Mizan in Arabic was printed in Iran and then it was printed in Beirut. Till now more than three editions have been printed in Iran and in Beirut in large numbers, and very few of the public and private libraries will be found without a complete set of it. All other libraries, too, at least have some of the volumes of this commentary on their shelves.

The original text of al-Mizan is written in Arabic, consisting of twenty volumes, and each volume has about four hundred pages of big size. It was intended that all those interested in reading the exegesis of the Qur'an may be properly benefited from this treasure of the Qur'anic teachings. Some of the pupils of 'Allamah Tabataba'i have translated this book into Persian under his able direction and supervision, and each one of the Arabic volume was translated in two volumes of the Persian, making a total number of forty. The share of this responsibility was shouldered by Aqa Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Musawi Hamadani. With the view that the entire Persian translation of al-Mizan should not appear in different styles, which would have affected the book's readability, 'Allamah Tabataba'i gave him the beginning volumes of al-Mizan also for retranslation. Twelve volumes of al-Mizan, corresponding to 6 Arabic volumes, have so far appeared in English, translated by the late Mawlana Sa'eed Akhtar Ridwi, and it is hoped that the other volumes would be rendered into English by another translator in the near future. We also hope that this fine exegesis of the Divine words of the Qur'an will be translated into other living languages of the world.

Biography of Late Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai By: Mohammad Yazdi

Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i was born in Tabriz in A.H. (lunar) 1321 or A.H. (solar) 1282, (A.D 1903) in a family of descendants of the Holy Prophet, which for fourteen generations has produced outstanding Islamic scholars. He received his earliest education in his native city, mastering the elements of Arabic and the religious sciences, and at about the age of twenty set out for the great Shiite University of Najaf Ashraf to continue more advance studies.

Most students in the madrasahs follow the branch of transmitted sciences" (al-'ulum al-naqilyah), especially the sciences dealing with the Divine Law, fiqh or jurisprudence and usul al-fiqh or the principles of

jurisprudence. Ayatullah Tabataba'i, however, sought to master both branches of the traditional sciences; the transmitted and the intellectual he studied Divine Law and the principles of jurisprudence with two of the great masters of that day, Mirza Muhammad Husayn Na'ini and Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Isfahani.

In addition to formal learning, or what the traditional Muslim sources "acquired science" ('ilm-i husuli), Ayatullah Tabataba'i sought after that "immediate science" ('ilmi-I-hudari) or gnosis through which knowledge turns into vision of the supernal realities. He was fortunate in finding a great master of Islamic gnosis, Mirza Al-Qadi, who initiated him into the Divine mysteries and guided him in his journey toward spiritual perfection.

Ayatullah Tabataba'i returned to Tabriz in A.H (solar) 1314 (AD 1934) and spent a few quiet years in that city teaching a small number of disciples, but he was as yet unknown to the religious circles of Persia at large. It was the devastating events of the Second World War and the Russian occupation of Persia that brought ' Ayatullah Tabataba'i from Tabriz to Qum in A.H. (solar) 1324 (A.H. 1945) Qum was then, and continues to be, the centre of religious studies in Persia. In his quiet and unassuming manner Ayatullah Tabataba'i began to teach in this holy city, concentrating on Qura'nic commentary and traditional Islamic philosophy and theosophy, which had not been taught in Qum for many years. His magnetic personality and spiritual presence soon attracted some of the most intelligent and competent of the students to him, and gradually he made the teachings of Mulla Sadri, once again a cornerstone of the traditional curriculum.

The activities of Ayatullah Tabataba'i since he came to Qum have also included frequent visits to Tehran. After the Second World War, when Marxism was fashionable among some of the youth in Tehran, he was the only religious scholar who took the pains to study the philosophical basis of Communism and supply a response to dialectical materialism from the traditional point of view. The fruit of this effort was one of his major works, *Usul-i-falsafah Wa rawish-i ri'alism* (The Principles of Philosophy and the Method: of Realism), in which he defended realism in its traditional and medieval sense against all dialectical philosophies. He also trained a number of disciples who belong to the community of Persians with a modern education.

Ayatullah Tabataba'i has therefore exercised a profound influence in both the traditional and modern circles in Persia. He has tried to create a new intellectual elite among the modern educated classes who wish to

be acquainted with Islamic intellectuality as well as with the modern world. Many among his traditional students who belong to the class of ulama have tried to follow his example in this important endeavour. Some of his students, such as Sayyid Jalal al-Din Ashtiyani of Mashhad University and Murtada Mutahhari of Tehran University, are themselves scholars of considerable reputation. Allamah Tabataba'i often speaks of others among his students who possess great spiritual qualities but do not manifest themselves outwardly.

In addition to a heavy program of teaching and guidance, 'Ayatullah Tabataba'i has occupied himself with writing many books and articles which attest to his remarkable intellectual powers and breadth of learning within the world of the traditional Islamic sciences.

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Chapter 3

Ayatullah Seyyid Abulqasim Musawi Al-Khoei (RA) - (1899-1992)

Ayatullah Seyyid Abulqasim Musawi Al-Khoei (RA) was born in Azerbaijan, Iran 15 Rajab 1317 H. / 1899 A. D. and passed away in Najaf Al-Ashraf, Iraq on 8 Safar 1412 A.H.(August 8, 1992)

Educated in the established traditional way of Shia Theology by well known jurists, he joined the world-renown theological institution in the holy city of Najaf Al-Ashraf in 1912, the year he migrated from Iran.

At an early age, he attained the degree of ijtiḥād i.e. the process of arriving at judgements on points of religious law using reason and the principles of jurisprudence. This achievement normally warrants the title of 'Ayatullah'.

Teaching, Juristic, and Writing Merits

He taught in Najaf for over 70 years. For 50 years, he specialized in supervising post-graduate studies, most advanced among which is 'Bahth-al-Kharij' - Graduation Classes - equivalent to a Doctoral thesis. Successful candidates are qualified to practice 'Ijtiḥād'

He is considered as the architect of a distinct school of thought in the principles of jurisprudence and Islamic law, and one of the leading exponents of 'kalam'-scholastic theology- and 'rijal'- study of the biographies of transmitters of ahādith, the Prophetic traditions, 'fiqh'- jurisprudence- and 'tafseer'- exegesis of The Holy Qur'an. His interests included astronomy, maths, and philosophy.

He was a prolific writer in the aforesaid disciplines. He wrote 37 books and treatises, most of which have been published. His works include:

- Lectures in the Principles of Jurisprudence - 10 volumes

- Biographies of Narrators of Tradition - 24 volumes.
- Islamic Law - 18 volumes.
- Al-Bayan fi tafsir al-Qur'an (The Elucidation of the Exegesis of The Qur'an)
- Minhaju-us-Saliheen (The Path of the Righteous) - 2 volumes, re-printed 78 times (guide book on religious practice and law) .
- Anthology of Religious Questions - Concise version of the Path of the Righteous - in Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, English, Turkish, Thai, Malay, Indonesian, and Gujarati.
- Mabani al-Istinbat (Edifices of Deduction) Principles of Jurisprudence.
- Ajwad-at-Taqrirat (The Best of Regulations) Principles of Jurisprudence.
- Sharh-el-Urwatul-Wuthqa (Commentary on The Steadfast Handle) - Jurisprudence.
- Treatise on Suspected Attire - Risala fil Libas Al-Mashkok, Evidential Jurisprudence.
- Nafahat-ul Ijaz (the Fragrance of Miracles), in defence of The Noble Qur'an.

His post-graduate institute normally accommodated some 150 students, at any given time. Among the students who attended classes and were personally supervised by Imam Al-Khoei included Ayatullah Al-Shaheed As-Sayyid Mohammad Baqir As-Sadr, Iraq, As-Sayyid Mahdi Al-Hakim Mohammad Mahdi Shamsuddin (Lebanon), Imam Mousa As-Sadr (Lebanon), As-Sayyid Mohammad Husain Fadh-lallah (Lebanon), Ayatullah Seyyid Mohammad Al-Rohani (Iran), Ayatullah Al-Ardabili, former Chief Justice of Iran , As-Sayyid Mohammad Ali Makki (Syria), As-Sayyid Mohammad Ali Bahrul 'Uloom (UK), Poet Mustafa Jamaluddin (Syria) .

After the death of As-Sayyid Mohsin Al- Hakim in 1972, Imam Al-Khoei succeeded him as The Grand Ayatullah (Al-Marja'a Al-a'alam) as he was the most knowledgeable of the 3 living Grand Ayatullahs. He had the greatest following among the Shias worldwide.

Achievements in the Welfare Sphere

He was fervently dedicated to establishing welfare, social, cultural, and educational institutions for Muslims worldwide. The following are some of the institutions he established:

- Al-Akhund

- Darul Hikmah (House of Theosophy)
- Madinatul Ilm (City of Knowledge) in Qom, Iran, considered one of the biggest theology centres in the Shia world. The complex comprises the school building and living quarters capable of accommodating 500 families.
- As-Sayyid Al-Khoei Center in Bangkok, Thailand.
- As-Sayyid Al-Khoei Center in Dhakkah, Bangladesh.
- Ahlul-Bayt University, Islamabad, Pakistan.
- Imam Al-Khoei Orphanage Beirut, Lebanon
- Imam As-Sadiq Education Institute for Boys, London, U.K.
- Imam As-Sadiq Education Institute for Girls, London, U.K.
- Al-Iman School, New York, U.S.A.

He was also the patron of about 1,000 grant-maintained students of theology from Iraq and other countries like Lebanon, Syria, Gulf States, India, Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, South East Asia. He provided financial support for maintaining the schools including boarding expenses, teachers' salaries and lodging costs.

Other Institutions

- Publishing House - Translation, printing and distribution of books worldwide, Karachi, Pakistan.
- Cultural Complex, Bombay , India. Considered among the biggest Shi' ite Muslims cultural centre-under construction.
- Representative Offices catering for the religious, social, educational, and cultural needs of Muslims all over the world,with the Headquarters in London, U. K. and branches in the United States, Canada, India, Pakistan, U.A. E., Oman, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, North Africa, Syria, Lebanon, Malaysia.

Imam Al-Khoei was a man of peace dialogue and understanding. He advocated non-violence and promoted tolerance,the values which mirror the human and universal principles of Islam.

In the aftermath of the violent crushing of the popular uprising in Iraq after the Gulf War by Saddam's troops, he was arrested with all members of his family, and many ulama, taken to Baghdad, and under duress was made to appear with Saddam on TV. Under mounting pressure, Saddam returned him, without his family, to Najaf, where he was placed under house arrest on the 20th of March, 1991.

Mass genocide, destruction, arrests, and displacement of civilians in

Najaf, as well as in other cities and towns in the South of Iraq and North perpetrated by the brutal Iraqi regime, left many cities virtually deserted and normal life came to a halt. All classes in Najaf came to a standstill, especially after the grave restrictions and constraints on the freedom of the Spiritual Leader. After his death a year later, Saddam's regime closed down the institute and deported, arrested and harrassed over 1000 students who had been registered with the institute.

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Remembering Late Ayatullah al-Uzma Abul-Qasim al-Khoei

Died at 3.13 pm on 8th August 1992 (8th Safar 1413)

The Muslim world lost one of its brightest stars when Grand Ayatullah, Abul-Qasim al-Khoei died at his Kufa home of heart failure. He was born on Rajab 15, 1317 A.H. (November 19, 1899) at Khoei in Iranian Azerbaijan, heartland of many great Shi'a thinkers and sufis, ascetics. Even in his early childhood, al-Khoei was versed in religious Persian and Arabic poetry and languages, and in Turkish as well. It was in 1330 A.H./1912 A.D. that al-Khoei, who was then only thirteen years old, migrated to al-Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq, in pursuit of knowledge. Even then, he was characterized by brilliance and a readiness to absorb knowledge and scholarship. In all stages of his study and research, progress and success were his companions.

THE HAWZA

Ten centuries ago, a university-type hawza was founded by the most knowledgeable person then alive, namely shaikh Muhammad ibn al-Hassan al-Toosi, may Allah have mercy on his soul. Al-Toosi was an intellectual giant, a genius by all standards, and a man who was able to absorb various types of knowledge and science. He was the undisputed authority in fiqh, the founder of the science of hadith, an innovative mentor of the science of usool, nay, the scholar of scholars in all branches of knowledge related to the science of biographies, akhlaq, and ilm al kalam. Thus did al-Toosi lay the foundation for the hawza which has been functioning since then, i.e. since 449 A.H.

MENTORS OF AL-KHOEI

If we were to research the fountainheads that nurtured the intellect of the late al-Khoei, we will come across a list of the finest among all contemporary scholars such as Shaikh Fath-Allah who is better known as Shaikh al-Sharee'a al-Isfahani, Shaikh Mahdi al-Mazandarani, Shaikh Dityaud-Deen al-Iraqi, Shaikh Muhammad Hussain al-Kampani al-Isfahani, Shaikh Muhammad Hussain al-Naeni, Shaikh Muhammad Jawad al-Balaghi, and others.

All of these men were considered as pioneers in the fields of their specialization. The impact of these men on shaping the mind of the late al-Khoei is best described by al-Khoei himself who has said: "I have learned from each one of them a complete course in the science of usool, and digested a number of books in the science of fiqh, for many years. I used to provide a critique of the research relevant of each one of them before a number of scholars who specialized in that branch of knowledge, and my audience included a good number of very highly respected scholars. Al-Naeeni, may Allah have mercy on his soul, was the last mentor I used to accompany more frequently than anyone else."

AL-KHOEI AS MENTOR

Al-Khoei had his own style in teaching and tutoring. Those who graduated from his courses describe his method of teaching as immaculately minute, stunningly easy and clear, amazingly logical. They say that there is neither undue complexity nor ambiguity in his style, and this can be said about all the courses he taught. How was his style in discussing and debating? The answer to this question is provided by one of his students: the struggling scientist, the pioneer and the shining star Shaikh Muhammad Jawad Maghniyyah who has said the following in this regard:

"He [al-Khoei] was like the sun that sends its rays everywhere, all the time. He was my professor and the professor of all other scholars at al-Najaf al-Ashraf, and the pivot round which the motion of scholarship revolved, and to whom the hawza is indebted for appreciation and loyalty... His was the golden age during which stars such as al-Shaikh al-Ansari and al-Shaikh al-Khurasani and their disciples shone... He remained [at the hawza] for more than seventy years learning, teaching, writing, helping scholars graduate, debating newcomers as well as alumni... His style in discussing and debating is that of Socrates". Al-Sayyid Abul-Qasim al-Khoei passed the stage of usool and continued teaching the much more advanced stage of al kharij for more than fifty years... ! The number of his graduates is estimated at tens of thousands...

THE IMAM AT HOME

His son, Sayyid Abdel-Majeed al-Khoei, says the following about his father, "My father was always smiling when he was with us. He always arbitrated between his sons whenever there was a dispute, and he was quite witty. If he saw one looking forlorn or happily excited, he would

ask him about the reason, and every evening he would distribute candy for the children in addition to whatever other gifts he had received that day from the admiring faithful." Despite his extremely lofty status, he never hesitated to help his family in domestic chores, including kitchen chores. He never opened the mail coming to any of his family members. One of his sons told him once that nobody in the house had any secret to hide from him, and that it was perfectly alright with them if he opened their mail, but he insisted never to do so. He always instructed members of his family to deliver funds for highly esteemed but impoverished families without doing so publicly, telling them to help those whom the ignorant ones mistake as wealthy because of their abstention from begging for help.

IMAM'S DEMISE

After the failure of the Intifada of March 1991, the Grand Ayatullah was briefly imprisoned then forced to appear on television with the Butcher of Baghdad Saddam Hussein who always kept pressuring him to issue fatawa, religious verdicts, supportive of Saddam and his government, something which he never did despite all the persecution to which he, his representatives and family members were subjected.

Because of refusing to cooperate with the dictatorial government of Saddam Hussein, he was put under house arrest till his death. Saddam also exiled, jailed, or assassinated many of the gifted students, representatives and distinguished followers of al-Khoei and ordered the destruction of their mosques and libraries particularly those in Najaf and Kerbala.

As if the Iraqi government predicted the death of al-Khoei, it cut off all telephone connections with his Kufa residence in the morning of Saturday, August 8, 1992 and with the houses of those who were close to him. Having performed the afternoon prayers that day, the health of his late holiness suddenly deteriorated and a severe chest swelling was visible. Doctors in the medical team charged with supervising his health conditions was called in, but they could not tend to him early enough. He informed his family and those in his presence that last night he felt that it was the last night he was spending with his family. **He asked for water to perform his ablution, and as soon as he finished his ablution his soul passed away to its Maker exactly at 3:13 pm.**

A three-day mourning period was announced by the government which prohibited the family of the deceased dignitary from holding the traditional Fatiha majlis, Baghdad's official newspaper Al-Jumhuriyyah

called him "the martyr of Islam and the nation," publishing his photograph on its front page. International news agencies, on the other hand, published photographs of his coffin escorted by no more than six persons. Shortly before his death, the greatest scholar and leader al-Khoei expressed no concern about anything in this vanishing life more than the possibility of the loss of his precious manuscripts the writing of which had exhausted so many years of his life... Surely the Islamic world will find it very hard to compensate for the loss of such a man, nay, a legendary institute and a lighthouse of knowledge and scholarship... Inna Lillah wa Inna Ilyahi Raji'oon.

[Written - October 1, 1992 - by - Yasin T. al-Jibouri - abridge version]

(Laws)

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Chapter 4

Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Ali Shah-Abadi - (1875-1950)

Purification of the soul and struggle for its perfection is a fundamental Islamic concept. The Holy Quran in an absolutely unique style emphasises on self-purification as the only way to eternal success and salvation.

"Indeed he succeeds who purifies his own self. And indeed he fails who corrupts his own self." 91:9-10

The path to this success is a lifetime struggle and the journey of self purification will end when lovers meet.

"O man! Verily, you are endeavouring towards your Lord an endeavour until you meet Him."
84:6

The methodology of how to successfully pass the trip is the subject of Islamic mysticism called Irfan. However, Islamic Irfan like many other Islamic sciences has been on occasion misused and misrepresented and hence those who fail to distinguish the authentic from the forged tend to deny the whole subject. The weakness of this approach is similar to denial of Islamic jurisprudence (al-Fiqh) for the reason that some so-called jurists have utilised analogy and inference in their deduction or relied on non-authentic Hadiths!

From the rise of Islam to this present day, many devoted Muslims have struggled on the Path of nearness to the Almighty Allah. Among them were the true followers of the Imams of Ahlul-Bait (a.s) who were satisfied from the pure prophetic fountain of Kauthar; through the holy hands of Ahlul-Bait.

What makes the Shia mystics distinguished whilst acknowledging the Tareqeh (path) and the Haqiqah (Truth) is their absolute obligation to the Islamic Shari'a law according to the pure and authentic teachings of Ahlul-Bait (a.s) and living in moderation far from either side of extremes.

This article aims at sharing some phases of the mystical personality of one of the great Shia mystics of the 20th century; **Grand Ayatollah Mirza Sheikh Muhammad Ali Shah-Abadi**, the main teacher and mentor of the late Imam Khomeini who without doubt had a grave impact on the mystical and spiritual personality of Imam Khomeini.

The late Ayatollah Shah-Abadi was originally from Isfahan-Iran. He was an expert in Islamic jurisprudence, Philosophy and Irfan. In philosophy and Irfan, he was the student of the late Ayatollah Mirza Abul-Hasan Isfahani (1823-1897AD) known as Jelweh and one of the four most celebrated philosophers in the history of Islamic philosophy. Apart from Jurisprudence and philosophy and Irfan, **the Grand Ayatollah Shah-Abadi was acquainted with Mathematics, al-Jafr and mastered the French language too.**

Imam Khomeini & Ayatollah Shah-Abadi

The blessings of the Almighty Allah upon Imam Khomeini (r.a) are indisputably the most significant of all Muslim scholars in the history of Islam. The Islamic Revolution in Iran and the establishment of an Islamic state under the full authority of Muslim jurists only is a favour that the Almighty Allah did not bestow upon any other scholar throughout the history of Islam.

In the entire blessed life of Imam Khomeini (r.a) two decades are the most significant of all. The first is the decade of studying Irfan under Ayatollah Shah-Abadi (r.a) commencing from 1928 and the other, the last decade of his life commencing from February 1979 during which he established the Islamic government in Iran. Experts assert that the first decade was a causing factor to the latter.

Ayatollah Shah-Abadi was one of the main teachers of Imam Khomeini (r.a) in Irfan[1]. The late Imam Khomeini was very much influenced by his teacher and repeatedly quoted from him in his books referring to him as *"The Perfect Arif Sheikh Shah-Abadi."*

Imam Khomeini in acknowledging the impacts of his teacher said in one of his speeches: *"Indeed, our honourable Sheikh had the right of spiritual life on me that my hands and tongue are insufficient to appreciate."* [27 April 1984]

The son of Imam Khomeini; the late Seyyed Ahmad said: "I asked my father what he studied under Ayatollah Shah-Abadi, he replied: Sharh Fosoos[2] and Mesbahul-Ons[3] and Manazelu-Saa'erin[4]. I asked how many classmates did you have. Imam Khomeini replied: Three students if it were crowded otherwise usually it was only me."

The late Imam Khomeini (r.a) studied Irfan under Ayatollah Shah-Abadi for about 6 years although he was saying: "If Ayatollah Shah-Abadi would teach for seventy years, I would still attend his classes, for every day he had new wisdom to offer."

Purification of the soul and struggle for its perfection is a fundamental Islamic concept. The Holy Quran in an absolutely unique style emphasises on self-purification as the only way to eternal success and salvation.

"Indeed he succeeds who purifies his own self. And indeed he fails who corrupts his own self." 91:9-10

Ayatollah Shah-Abadi & The Love for Ahlul-Bait (a.s)

Ayatollah Nasrullah; one of the sons of Grand Ayatollah Shah-Abadi quoting from his father says: "The foundation of Islam is the love for Fatima (s.a). The foundation of Islam is to dislike the enemies of Fatima (s.a). Whoever loves Fatima (s.a) and dislikes her enemies, is a (true) Muslim."

His Worshipping

Ayatollah Shah-Abadi was the Imam of the grand mosque in the Bazaar of Tehran-Iran. When he was standing on his prayer mat to lead the prayer he would become detached from this world and when he was sitting up from his Sujood (Prostration) tears flowed onto his cheek and beard.

His recitation of Do'a Kumail was very significant. He used to recite the Do'a of Kumail in the same mosque about two hours before Fajr prayer at dawn with a few people who were enthusiastic to attend such a spiritual supplication.

Some of His Recommendations

His son, Ayatollah Nasrullah narrating from his father says: "My father always reminded us of the Salawaat of Fatima (s.a) before the Fajr prayer. [5]And even if you are not spiritually prepared to pray the night Prayer make sure you are awake at its time even for a cup of tea!"

"One day he was invited to give a lecture at one of the mosques in Tehran. To save his time and the time of others he made his speech very short but proposed to the audience that if anyone was really interested in self-purification and self-building they should come and see him later.

One of the businessmen from the audience came to him later and requested a prescription for self purification.

Ayatollah Shah-Abadi gave him three recommendations:

1) Be mindful of Salaat in its fixed times, especially in congregation as much as possible.

2) Be fair in your transactions and don't be greedy.

3) Although the obligation of Khums payment is annual, try to pay it monthly.

The businessman says, "I followed his instructions for a couple of months until on one occasion I was praying behind the Sheikh in one of the mosques in Tehran. During the prayer, to my astonishment, I noticed that the Imam was momentarily disappearing. Immediately after the prayer I shared my observation with him. With a big surprise he humbly replied that before he attended the prayer, he had been involved in some family problems and hence could not fully focus on his prayer at all times. It was only then that I realised I had my first mystical experience. The Imam had been disappearing from his position every time he lost his concentration during the prayer."

Imam Khomeini (r.a) said: "My teacher, the late Shah-Abadi was recommending to me to frequently recite Surah al-Hashr (59) especially from Ayah 18 to the end of the Surah."

The Perfect Arif; Grand Ayatollah Shah-Abadi departed this temporary world to his eternally dwelling in nearness to his Beloved One; the Almighty in 1950 (1875AH) and his body was buried at the shrine of Hazrat Shah-Abdul-Azim in Tehran.

References:

1. Arif Kaamel by Research Department of the Cultural Institution of Shahid Shah-Abadi
2. Shah-Abadi Bozorg; the heaven of Irfan, by Mohammad Ali Mohammadi

[1] Another important teacher of Imam Khumeini in Irfan was Ayatollah Mirza Jawad Maleki.

[2] Sharh Fosoos by al-Qounawi, the second most advanced textbook in Theoretical Irfan, is an explanation on Fosoosul Hekam (the Gems of Wisdom) by Ibn al-Arabi.

[3] Mesbahul-Ons (the Light of Intimacy) by Ibn Fanari, the most advanced textbook in Theoretical Irfan, is an explanation for 'Meftahul-Ghayb' by al-Qoonawi

[4] Manaselu Saa'erin by Khaje Abdullah al-Ansari with its most famous explanation by al-Kashani is the main textbook in Practical Irfan.

{5] Salawat of Fatima (s.a) is to say: “ Allahumma Sallé Alaa Fatima Wa Abiha Wa Ba’leha Wa Baniha Wa Serrel Mosta’dá’e Feeha Be Adadeh Maa Ahata Behi Elmok.

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Chapter 5

Ayatullah Muhammad Radha Gulpaygani - (1898-1993)

Born : On : 1898 AD At : , Iran
Died : On : 9th Dec Thursday 1993 AD At : Qum, Iran
Age 95 years

Ayatullah Gulpaygani was born on the wiladat of the 8th Imam and was therefore named Muhammad Radha. He lost both his parents at a very young age; his mother died when he was 3 years old and his father died when he was 9 years old. His father's name was Syed Muhammad Baqir Imam; he was a renowned aalim for his worldly detachment and Taqwa (God- Consciousness), and was very diligent on correct etiquette, performing the mustahabaat (recommended acts) of the religion, Amr-bil-Ma'ruuf and Nahi anil Munkar. His grave is still a place where people go and perform Ziyarat.

Ayatullah Gulpaygani was not much more than a teenager when he discovered intense love for learning Islamic knowledge from his teacher, Ayatullah Syed Muhammad Hassan Khonsari, and his Arabic language teacher, Syed Muhammad Taqi Gawdhi. At the age of 19 years he went to the city of Arak, and joined the Madressa of Agha Syed Zayauldeen

where he completed his initial studies, before joining the lessons of Usul Fiqh at the Dars-e-Kharij level taught by Ayatullah Abdul Karim Haeri Yazdi for three years.

His migration to Qom:

At the age of 24 years, Ayatullah Gulpaygani followed his teacher Ayatullah Haeri (who had moved to Qom to form the Hawza) to the Holy city of Qom, and joined the Faiziya Madressa. His teacher Ayatullah Haeri saw the tremendous potential and talent in him and became extremely fond of him.

He made Ayatullah Gulpaygani one of his private disciples and placed him in the council to answer religious queries.

Ayatullah Gulpaygani gained permission from Ayatullah Haeri to practice Ijtihad.

As soon as Ayatullah Gulpaygani arrived in Qom in the year 1921, he immediately became involved in teaching at the Hawza and taught well known texts such as Makasib, Rasail

and Kifaye. After the death of Ayatullah Haeri, he began to teach Fiqh and Usul at the Dars-e-Kharij level and for 70 years taught the knowledge of the Ahlul Bayt (as).

Some his well known students include: Martyr Murtadha Mutahhari, Syed Muhammad Hussein Beheshti, Ayatullah Jaffer Subhani, Ayatullah Saafi Gulpaygani and Ayatullah

Hassan Zadeh Amuli. Ayatullah Gulpaygani was a Marja-e-Taqleed for over 32 years and on a daily basis used to be busy answering questions from all over the world. He also issued fatwas on all areas of fiqh, which are currently available in a number of texts.

His political role:

From the beginning of the revolution, even though Ayatullah Gulpaygani put his own life at risk, he played a significant role during the revolution and the fight against the Shah's

regime. He was one of the first Ulema to protest against a controversial bill passed in 1922, and he continued issuing statements till the fall of the regime.

Akhlaq:

Among his characteristics were: lack of worldly attachments, humility, making use of opportunities and encouragement of aalims and writers. He placed a great emphasis on reciting and memorising the Qur'an; every day/night, he would complete 2 chapters of the Qur'an, despite any pains, etc. He also placed emphasis on respect towards teachers; he would recite Sura

Fateha for his teacher before every class, and paid great respect to the son of his teacher, Ayatullah Murtadha Haeri, even though he himself was his teacher.

AYATULLAH AL-U²MA AL-HAJ AS-SAYYID MUHAMMAD RIDHA AL-GULPAYGAN« departed for his heavenly abode on Thursday night, 9th of December at the age of 96. He suffered from acute respiratory deficiency and lung infection for which he was confined to

the hospital. The Ayatullah who was the supreme religious authority of the Shi'a world, became terminally ill immediately after midnight Tuesday and was shed to the Cardiac Care Unit of the hospital but his condition continued to deteriorate, despite the extra care and attention of the doctors.

Ayatullah al-Gulpaygani went into a coma on Wednesday morning and eventually left the mortal world minutes before the evening prayers on Thursday.

He was born in the village of Koukeh near the city of Gulpaygan (135 kms north-east of Isfahan) in the closing years of the 19th century. At the age of 20, he went to Arak which was the centre of the Theological studies. There, he received his education under Ayatullah al-'U'ma ash-Shaykh 'Abd al-Karim al-Hairi. Later in 1921 he went to the city of Qum to complete his studies.

In the early 1960's following the death of Ayatullah al-'U'ma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Mu'ammad Hussein al-Burujerdi and during the banishment of Ayatullah al-'U'ma al-Hajj as-Sayyid R£'ullah al-Musawi al-Khumayni from Iran, he became superintendent of the Qum Theological Seminary. He took over the administration of the school at a crucial time when both the theological school and Islamic scholars were in at stake due to repressive measures directed by the Shah. At that time he had about 800 students who attended his classes and received advanced training in religious studies.

Ayatullah al-Gulpaygani is the author of a number of scholarly works and treatises, as well as commentaries on various other valuable Islamic works. Among them is an annotation on 'Urwatul Wuthqa', 'Tawṣi' al-Masa'il', 'Manasik al-Hajj' and many others.

He rendered valuable services during his superintendence of the Theological Seminary in Qum, and also helped establish almost 30 theological schools in various towns and cities throughout Iran, as well as health clinics for students and other types of public utility centers in many parts of the country and abroad as well.

Ayatullah al-Gulpaygani was a great scholar and Marja' and he had many followers throughout the world. He subscribed to the concept of Wilayat-e-Faqihi put forward by Ayatullah al-Khumayni.

The present Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatullah as-Sayyid 'Ali al-Husaini al-Khamenei', expressed deep condolence over the sad demise of the Grand Ayatullah Mu'ammad Riṣa al-Gulpaygani. He was one of the pillars of the Islamic Revolution and The Islamic Republic, said the leader in a statement.

During the oppressive rule of the former regime and in confronting the bitter incidents which occurred in the years after the banishment from Iran of Ayatullah al-Khumayni (in 1963), there were some occasions when the voice of this great personality was the only threatening voice against the former regime, which was raised from the Qum theological seminary and gave enthusiasm to the Islamic movement.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, he gave an active contribution in managing the general affairs of the revolution, and he unequivocally supported the Islamic Republic system and its exalted leadership. He was respected and honoured by the late Ayatullah al-Khumayni.

“The departure of this divine scholar was a grave and irreparable loss”, the statement added. It also stated that the Grand Ayatullah was a Marja’ Taqlid for 32 years, a teacher at the Qum theological seminary for about 72 years, while his learning and teaching Fiqh (Jurisprudence) lasted for about 85 years.

He was the first person to establish modern theological seminary and his institute was the one for Qur’anic studies in Qum. He was the first person to prepare a table of contents for Fiqh and Hadith (Tradition) by using modern technology (computers and CD-Rom).

He founded hundreds of schools, mosques and Islamic propagation centres in Iran and other countries, and he brought up thousands of scholars.

Chapter 6

Ayatullah Muhammad Taqi Khonsari - (1850-1951)

Born : On : 1274 H AD

At : , Iran

Died : On : 1951 AD

At : Qum, Iran

Age :101 years

Ayatullah Khonsari was from the lineage of the 7th Imam, Imam Musa Kadhim B, and was the son of Allamah Syed Asadullah.

Ayatullah Khonsari was introduced to the knowledge of Islam from a very young age; he had not even reached the age of 7 when he had already learnt Arabic Grammar, Introduction to Islamic Knowledge, and a section of Usul and Fiqh. In order to take the initial studies (that he had begun with his father) to another level, Ayatullah Khonsari made his way to the Hawza in Najaf. He attended lessons in Fiqh and Usul, taught by the great scholars Ayatullah Mullah Khorasani and Ayatullah Muhammad Kadhim Tabatabai Yazdi. He then continued his learning in Usul under Ayatullah Naainee and Ayatullah Agha Dhaya Iraqi. Although he had reached the station of Ijtihad, he never actually made a point to formalise this achievement, and it was only when Ayatullah Khonsar returned to Iran that Ayatullah Iraqi sent him a formal letter of proof confirming that he had obtained the qualifications of Ijtihad.

Ayatullah Iraqi used to many times comment on the status and worth of Ayatullah Khonsari.

His time in the war front during the First World War:

In the beginning of the First World War, the Ottoman empire was allied with Germany. In 1903, with the arrival of the British in Iraq and their conquest of Basra and the neighbouring areas, it was a very sensitive time indeed. The Ottoman Empire sought help from the Shia Ulema, and although the spread of despotism around Iraq was because of the Ottoman Government, the Ulema could not just sit on the sidelines and observe the Holy City of Iraq being trampled over. Thus, many of the

Maraje issued a fatwa of Jihad, but because of their old age, they sent their children to the war front as their representatives. Another group of Mujtahids themselves also chose the path of Jihad. It was during the period of Muharram that this sensational fatwa was issued. Ayatullah Khonsari left his studies and with a vanguard of scholars including Ayatullah Syed Mustafa Kashani (his study partner), made his way to the warfront in the neighbourhood of Basra, via the River Euphrates in a ship. He shared a bunker in the frontline with Ayatullah Mustafa Kashani and Agha Bakhtiyari Zaade. He was a soldier always full of life, even when the going used to get tough or the enemy was on the offensive. What was more surprising was a time when the enemy had placed them under intense siege and were getting closer and closer; whilst most of the soldiers were preparing for the worst, Ayatullah Khonsari was getting more and more passionate and intense about his prayers, which he used to pray with a great amount of fervour.

Being taken a prisoner:

During the war, a part of Ayatullah Khonsari's foot became wounded and he got taken prisoner. The occupiers gathered the prisoners of war in the port of Basra, and from there they were gathered in ships and sent away into captivity to one of their colonies, the island of Singapore. Ayatullah Khonsari was one of 400 people taken captive. The journey to Singapore took four months and the captives were then held in a prison in the middle of nowhere. During his time in prison, despite the very tough and severe environment, he continued and strived to teach Logic and Wisdom and also managed to teach himself English from an Indian Raja. When the head of the prison became aware that Ayatullah Khonsari was a scholar and knew English, he requested him to translate a book meant to mislead the people; however, Ayatullah Khonsari refused and maybe it was because of this refusal that the wardens wanted to kill him. Ayatullah himself mentions that: 'One day all the prisoners had gone out, and I was behind alone. The warden brought a wild animal into the prison and let it loose at the foot of the door. He then hit the wild animal and thus the animal approached me with ferocity.

It came very close to me but ended up doing nothing. It then went back to the foot of the door and then returned back towards me. It did this a number of times, but each time did nothing to me.' Ayatullah Khonsari spent 4 years in prison and was only released because of the efforts of the Raja from India, who tried for his release as soon as he himself was released from prison.

His salaah:

Ayatullah's salaah used to be a wonderful event. Belief in Allah was so manifested in him that in salaam he used to cast aside the veils and his soul used to be in the remembrance of Heaven. He himself said: 'When I stand for salaah, it is as if I am having a conversation with Allah and facing him.' He also led salaah-e-jamaat at Faiziya Madressa, where the people who usually had many doubts about the adalat (justice) of the Imams of salaah-e-jamaat did not just follow anyone. However, they prayed behind him without any problems or objections.

Salaah for rain:

One of the most important events to show the status of Ayatollah was the event of the salaah for rain. In the city of Qom in the Iranian year 1323 (approx. 1944 AD), the rains had not arrived and the food levels had reached critical levels.

The people saw the recital of 'salaah-e-Istagasa' (prayer for rain) as a solution to the drought. They approached the Ulema to lead the prayer and although a couple of the Ulema declined the offer to recite the prayer, Ayatullah Khonsari was unable to refuse the request of the people. The news spread around the city of Qom that Ayatullah Khonsari was due to lead the prayer on the Friday. 20,000 people gathered together to recite the salaah at a location known as Khak-e-Faraj. On that day the prayer for rain was not responded to. Ayatullah Khonsari, who had perceived the beneficence of Allah many times before, knew very well that by begging from Allah, the dua would eventually be accepted. Therefore, he made a decision to go and say the prayer again; they decided to go to the garden behind the graveyard of 'Nawabpaa'. When sunset arrived on the Sunday, the sky turned red and cloudy and rain fell with such intensity that it is said rain like that had not been seen until then. Someone narrates: 'That day, as per normal, I went to the Faiziya Madressa to say my salaah-e-jamaat behind Ayatullah Khonsari. At the moment, I cannot remember the reason why there was a lecture in the Faiziya Madressa after the evening salaah, but Marhum Hajji Muhammad Taki Ishraqi was giving a lecture when it began to rain...that evening it rained extensively.'

Chapter 7

Ayatullah Al-Uzama Bahauddini - (1909-1997)

Birth 1909

Death 1997

Age 89 yrs

Ayatullah Bahauddini was born on the day of Eid-e-Ghadeer to a religious family, who named him Syed Radha. His lineage goes back to Imam Sajjad B. Syed Radha's father was called Syed Safiyudin, and had the distinction of being one of the humble volunteers in the haram of Bibi Ma'sooma ؑ. Syed Safiyudin, together with having a very good memory, had a very intimate relationship with the Holy Qur'an which he used to love to read.

Ayatullah Bahudinni's mother was called Fatemah Sultani, and was famously known as 'the wife of Agha.' She was a very pious and sincere lady as well as a very kind, affectionate and clever person. She was from the offspring of Mullah Sadra Shirazi, who was a scholar of very high calibre. Her contentment, simplicity in her life and her love and attachment for her husband was what distinguished her from others. She also had a very intimate relationship with the Qur'an and a real familiarity with the duas of the Ma'sumin.

Ayatullah Bahauddini in his childhood:

During his childhood, Ayatullah Bahauddini always showed signs of an extraordinary memory, a great aptitude and was able to perceive everything around him. He himself narrated that: 'When I was one year old, I used to really like people of a pure nature, and I used to get attached to them at the level of

the soul. I could distinguish between good and evil, and I was also able to distinguish between good and righteous people and those that were evil and rebellious.'

When Syed Radha reached the age of two, they had set up a school for him at home where he learnt Surah Hamd and Surah Tawheed, the Qur'an and the Adhan and Iqamah; it was also during this age that he started reading and writing. At the age of six he joined another school and began to study Arabic vocabulary and other texts.

Right from his youth, Ayatullah Bahauddini used to have great love for praying salaah-ul-layl and fasting. For years he engaged in these two forms of worship (so much) that it had a great inner effect on his soul.

On this point he narrates that: 'The first time that I connected with the souls of the great scholars from the heavenly kingdom was when I was persevering with an extremely tough fast. I also used to feel intense love and inner desire to perform the night prayer, so much so that even a sweet sleep had no value against the pleasure of reciting salaah-ul-layl.

This love for salaah-ul-layl was so great that I used to automatically wake up when the time would arrive; even on nights when I was very tired, a 'hand' from the heavenly world used to wake me up. I remember that in the Iranian year 1356 (approx. 1977 AD), I was sick and the result of this illness was that I had become extremely weak. I therefore made a decision that on that evening, I will take a break from reciting the salaah-ul-layl, because of lack of strength.

However, when the time of pre-dawn arrived I saw Ayatullah Khomeini in my dream and he said to me, 'Wake up and busy yourself in the prayer of the night.' That evening, because of Imam Khomeini's words, I woke up and busied myself in the night prayer.'

An anecdote from his life:

One of the devotees of Ayatullah Bahauddini narrates: 'In the summer of 1974, great economic pressure weighed me and my family down, such that I couldn't buy (even) a few fruits for my family. Because of this, I was in a lot of pain and suffering. Even though my wife did not speak about this, my inner worry and ashamed conscience had made life hard on me.

One night at the time of Maghrib, I was on my way to the Husseiniya of the Ayatullah to pray salaah-e-jamaat behind him (Ayatullah Bahaud-dini). When I passed a fruit shop, without realising it, it crossed my mind that how good it would be if I had some money and could buy some fruits of the season (just) once for home!

When I entered the Husseiniya, Ayatullah's gaze fell on me. He came near me and said: 'So-and-so! There is some money, should I bring it for you?' After thinking a bit, I said: 'Ok.' After salaah he went to his house

and brought 1,500 Tomans for me. It was as if he was aware of my niyyat!’

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Seyyed Hossein Borujerdi - (1875-1961)

Birth: 1875 1292 AH **Death:** March 30, 1961 (aged 86) 1381 AH.

Ayatollah Seyyed Hossein Borujerdi (1875-1961) (Persian: ??? ????) was a Twelver Shi'a Marja and the leading Marja in Iran from roughly 1947 to his death in 1961.[1]

Education and academic specialties

Borujerdi was born in the city of Borujerd in the province of Lorestan in Iran, hence the surname.

In his youth, Borujerdi studied under a number of Shi'ite masters of Islamic jurisprudence such as Mohammad-Kazem Khorasani and Aqa Zia Iraqi, and specialized in fiqh. He studied the fiqahat of all the Islamic schools of thought, not just his own, along with the science of rijal. Though he is known for citing masoomeen to support many of his deductions, Borujerdi is known for elucidating many aspects himself and is an influential fiqh jurist in his own right. He has had a strong influence on Islamic scholars like Morteza Motahhari and Ayatollah Shaikh Husain Montazeri.

Tenure as Ayatollah and Marja

Borujerdi revived the hawza of Qom in 1945 (1364 AH), which had waned after the death in 1937 of its founder, Shaykh Abdul Karim Ha'iri. When Sayyid Abul Hassan Isfahani died the following year, the majority of Shi'a accepted Ayatullah Borujerdi as Marja'-e-Taqlid. Scholar Roy Mottahedeh reports that Borujerdi was the sole marja "in the Shia world" from 1945-6 until his death in 1961.[2]

Efforts toward Islamic unity

Borujerdi was the first Marja' to look beyond Iraq and Iran. He sent Sayyid Muhaqqiqi to Hamburg, Germany, Aqa-e-Shari'at to Karachi, Pakistan, Al-Faqihi to Madinah and Sayyid Musa Sadr to Lebanon.

He established cordial relations with Shaykh Mahmud Shaltut, the grand Shaykh of Al-Azhar. Together, the two scholars established the "House for Bringing Muslim Sects Nearer" in Cairo. Shaltut issued a famous fatwa accepting the Shi'a faith as one of the recognised sects of Islam. and Ayatullah Sayyid Husain Burojirdi vehemently opposed those who attacked the Khulafa' in their speeches and writings.

Political leanings

Unlike many clergy and temporal rulers, Borujerdi and Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, are said to have had cordial and mutually beneficial relations, starting with a visit by the not-yet-Shah to Borujerdi's hospital room in 1944. Borujerdi is said to have generally remained aloof from politics and given the Shah his "tacit support," while the Shah did not follow his father's harsh anti-clericalism (for example he exempted clergy from military service), and until Borujerdi's death occasionally visited the cleric.[3]

Borujerdi's belief in quietism, or separation of church from state, extended to keeping silent in public on such issues as Israel's treatment of the Palestinians, the overthrow of Mohammed Mossadeq and the end of his campaign to nationalize and control the British-owned oil industry in Iran, and the Baghdad Pact alliance with the US and UK.[4] It is thought that as a reward for this support the Shah ensured more religious instruction in state schools, tightened control of cinemas and other offensive secular entertainment during Moharram.

Ayatollah Borujerdi passively opposed the Pahlavi regime's agrarian reforms, which he called "agrarian destruction." [5] In his view, the confiscations of large concentrations of landholdings of aristocrats and clergy by the Pahlavi shahs disrupted the fabric of rural life and eroded religious institutions.

Future revolutionary Ruhollah Khomeini was an underling of Borujerdi and Borujerdi forbade him to take part in political activities, a ban which only ended with Borujerdi's death.**Influenced: Morteza Motahhari**

Death

He died in Qum on 13th Shawaal 1381 AH. at the ripe age of 90. Borujerdi died in Qom on March 30, 1961.[6] The Shah proclaimed three days of mourning and attended a memorial service in his honor.[7]

BIOGRAPHY OF LATE AYATOLLAH BORUJERDI

Sayyid Hussain Tabatabaai Borujerdi, popularly known as Haaj Agha Hussain Borujerdi, son of Sayyid Ali, was born in the year 1292 A.H. (Lunar) in Borujerd, and passed away in the morning of Thursday, 12th Shawwal 1380 A.H./Lunar (10th Farvardin 1340 A.H./Solar) in Qum. He was a famous Faqeeh (Shi'ite Jurisprudent) and a great Marja' (Chief Religious Authority) of the 14th century Hegira.

EDUCATION:

Ayatollah Borujerdi had his primary education in Borujerd. He then attended Noorbakhsh seminary in Borujerd where he completed his preliminary and intermediate Islamic education. From the year 1310 A.H. he pursued further the learning of Islamic sciences, including philosophy, in the city of Isfahan. In 1319 he attained the status of Ijtihad (competence for inference of Islamic decrees and precepts) at the age of 28 when he returned to his hometown, Borujerd. In 1320 A.H. he went to the holy city of Najaf, and completed his education by the year 1328.

HIS TEACHERS:

He was taught religious sciences in Isfahan by great religious teachers like Sayyid Muhammad Baaqir Durchehi, Mirza Abul-Maali Kalbasi, Sayyid Muhammad Taqi Mudarris and Sayyid Abul-Qasim Dehkordi. In Najaf, his teachers included Akhund Khorasani, Sayyid Muhammad Kazem Yazdi and Sheikh Shariat Isfahani. He was taught philosophy by renowned teachers such as Mullah Muhammad Kashi and Hakim Jahangir Khan Qashqaii in Isfahan as well.

HIS TRAVELS:

After completing his education in Najaf, Ayatollah Borujerdi returned to Borujerd in 1328 and took his residence there for several years. After years of residence in Borujerd, he traveled and lectured in different places. Wherever he went, he was graciously welcomed by local dignitaries and Ulema who requested him to hold teaching and discussion sessions. His travels are detailed below:

- Travel to Mashad in 1340, where he stayed for several months
- Travel to Qum on his way back from Mashad; his sojourn in these two cities lasted 1.5 years.
- Haj Pilgrimage in 1345; this travel was made through Iraq, where he stayed for four months in Najaf. There he was welcomed by distinguished Ulema including Grand Ayatollahs Mirzaye Naiini, Sayyid Abul-Hasan Isfahani, Agha Dhiyauddin Iraqi, and Sheikh Muhammad

Hussain Isfahani. While returning from Haj and upon his arrival at the Iranian border with Iraq, he was arrested and taken to Tehran for the reason of participation in a gathering of Ulema in Najaf against Reza Shah (the incumbent king of Iran).

- After his release from detention he stayed in Tehran for nearly three months before proceeding to Mashad. After a stay of seven months in Mashad he returned to Borujerd.

- Towards the end of the year 1363 A.H./Lunar (1323 A.H./Solar) he traveled to Tehran for medical treatments. He was hospitalized in Firoozabadi Hospital in Shahre-Rey for nearly two months. After his discharge from the hospital in early 1364 A.H./Lunar (winter of 1323 A.H./Solar), he went to Qum and spent the rest of his life over there.

- Travel to Mashad in the summer of 1324 (A.H./Solar) for a period of three months

INCUMBENCY OF THE POST OF SUPERINTENDENCE OF HAWZAH ILMIYYAH (THEOLOGICAL CENTER) OF QUM, AND ATTAINING THE POSITION OF MARJAIYYAT AAM (CHIEF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY):

In the winter of 1323 A.H./Solar, after leaving the hospital, Ayatollah Borujerdi arrived in Qum. Upon the request and insist of dignitaries and Ulema of Hawzah Ilmiyyah of Qum, Ayatullah Borujerdi agreed to undertake the overall responsibility for running the Qum Theological Center. At the same time many of the teachers and educators of Hawzah stopped their classes to pay respect to him as the prominent teacher of Hawzah.

Before long, his Muqallideen (followers of his decrees) increased in number. The demise of Ayatollah Sayyid Abul-Hasan Isfahani in 1325 A.H./Solar, and a few months later, demise of Ayatollah Haaj Agha Hussain Qummi, resulted in their Shi'ite followers turning to Ayatollah Borujerdi as their new Marja'e Taqleed (Source of issuing Islamic Jurisprudential decrees). Thus, the chair of Marjaiyyat Aam (chief religious authority) was taken by Ayatollah Borujerdi.

AYATOLLAH BORUJERDI'S ERUDITE PERSONALITY:

Ayatollah Borujerdi had already become well known for his erudition, especially in the religious sciences, as evidenced by the acclaim he received in his travels to Mashad, Qum and Najaf.

While learning at Najaf, he himself taught the book "Al-Fosul" as well. In the branch of science known as 'Usule Fiqh' (Principles of

Islamic Jurisprudence) he followed the views of Akhund Khorasani; and in his lectures on this subject, he tried to be brief and to make discussions easy and simplified. He was careful about proper understanding of the viewpoints of the past Shiite Jurisprudents whose decrees he collected and examined thoroughly and held in esteem, especially those of Hassan Ibne Abi Aquil Ummani and Muhammad Ibne Junaid Iskafi.

He believed that Traditions, Sayings, and Narrations of Shiite infallible Imams (A.S.) were best understood by referring to the narrations and decrees issued by Sunnite contemporaries of the Imams (A.S.), for in those days Sunnite decrees were prevailing, and even the disciples of the Holy Imams (A.S.) used to ask them their questions according to the decrees of Sunnite people, and the Imams also replied on the same basis. For this very reason, Ayatollah Borujerdi considered that reference to the Sunnite decrees, constituted a part of the prerequisite studies pertaining to Fiqh. He said: "The earlier Shiite Jurisprudents were aware of the opposing views on problems". He added: "The ancient scholars quoted Sunnite decrees in their books or in their lessons and subjected them to their critical evaluation." For this reason he initiated printing of Sheikh Tusi's book entitled "Al-Khilaf" for the first time.

To infer Islamic precepts and decrees, Ayatollah Borujerdi relied more on a careful scrutiny to the Traditions/Narrations than on practicalities. With regard to different narrations which were all cited by a single narrator, Ayatollah Borujerdi juxtaposed them altogether, and most often this juxtaposition resulted in his conclusion that all of them were related to the same original Tradition or source, which had come to be interpreted and assimilated in various ways later by the succeeding narrators.

WRITINGS / COMPILATIONS:

In addition to some monographs written by his students, writings of Ayatollah Borujerdi himself included the following:

- 1) Jame' Ahadith Ul-Shia' (The Comprehensive Book of Shiite Traditions/Narrations)
- 2) An Encyclopedia that includes an index of narrators, as well as a bibliography of writings on the subjects of 'Rijal' and 'Hadith'(Traditions) along with their documentations
- 3) Hashiah (Annotations) on the book 'Urwatul-Wuthqa'
- 4) Hashiah (Annotations) on Sheikh Tusi's 'Khilaf'
- 5) Sharh (Explanatory Monograph) on the book 'Kifayatul-Usul'

SERVICES RENDERED BY AYATOLLAH BORUJERDI DURING HIS TENURE AS THE SUPERINTENDENT OF HAWZAH ILMIYYAH OF QUM

During the days of Reza Shah, the Hawzah Ilmiyyah of Qum was weakened. After Ayatollah Borujerdi undertook the administration and management of the seminary, its power was restored.

The institution became self-supporting after the public increasingly reposed their confidence in and allegiance to him as Marja'e Taqleed (their Jurisprudential advisor).

The administrative and educational improvements became evident. For instance, with regard to the matter of collection of Islamic taxes, all cases of appointments of individuals as proxies for this purpose were duly registered. Also all correspondence was recorded.

The number of students, which totaled some two thousand (2000) when Ayatollah Borujerdi took over, had trebled by the time of his death.

Specific improvements in the teaching system were also noticeable. Ayatollah Borujerdi was successful to set up a systematic curriculum in the Hawzah Ilmiyyah. Some teachers were appointed or nominated to be responsible for students' tests. The students were requested to take the examinations, and their stipend payment was made conditional upon their participation in the exams. This requirement met with some formidable opposition, inasmuch as in Najaf, Ayatollah Istahbanati banned participation in such exams. Although a senior Ayatollah, Sayyid Abdul-Hadi Shirazi, supported the exams required by Ayatollah Borujerdi, due to the intensification of oppositions, Ayatollah Borujerdi himself ordered the examination schedule in Najaf to be cancelled.

Ayatollah Borujerdi was interested in good handwriting and correct syntax in writing, to the extent that he wanted to include them in the syllabi for the purpose of the tests.

He encouraged diligent students, and thereby contributed to the growth of learning level at the seminary.

By publishing magazines like "Lessons From The Islamic School", he provided opportunity for the accomplished individuals at Hawzah to express their own views and make them known inside the country or beyond the borders of Iran.

Among Ayatollah Borujerdi's commendable initiatives is that of dispatching missionaries abroad in connection with Islamic propagation and educational activities. One of his envoys was Sheikh Muhaqqiq

Rashti who went to Germany and was able to establish a grand, magnificent mosque in Hamburg.

AYATOLLAH BORUJERDI'S VIEWS ON BRINGING ABOUT PROXIMITY AMONG DIFFERENT ISLAMIC SECTS:

Ayatollah Borujerdi was a protagonist of unity and solidarity of the Islamic world and tried to create a kind of proximity among different Muslim sects. In this connection, he corresponded with Dar ul-Taqrīb (Center of Proximity) in Cairo and its founders, including Sheikh Abdul-Majid Salim and Sheikh Mahmood Shaltut, the former Rectors of Al-Az'har University. Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Qummi, as the Secretary-General, represented Ayatollah Borujerdi in Dar ul-Taqrīb, Cairo.

Continuous communications and contacts of Ayatollah Borujerdi with Dar ul-Taqrīb and the Rectors of Al-Az'har University resulted in Sheikh Shaltut's historic Fatwa (Islamic Decree) concerning attestation of the legitimacy of the "Shiite" sect. It introduced the Shiite Sect as one of the legitimate Islamic Schools of Thought to all Muslims and others in the world.

Ayatollah Borujerdi, was sensitive and averse towards sectarian divisiveness among Muslims, and tried his very best to prevent it. He did not recommend, or justify, any undue focus of attention on the issue of caliphate and its historical account. When dealing with the topic of Imamate, too, he abstained from being engaged in the issue of caliphate. On the contrary, he considered the issue of caliphate as a historical event that is passed, and does not call for a discussion at the present time.

The important matter, he believed, was to identify the sources of "Ahkam" (Islamic decrees and precepts). For this reason, he highlighted the importance of the scientific dimension of Imamate according to what the holy Prophet (S.A.) has stated in the famous 'Hadith of Thaqa'lain'.

AYATOLLAH BORUJERDI AND THE PAHLAVI REGIME

As mentioned earlier, Ayatollah Borujerdi was arrested and imprisoned once. That was in the year 1306 A.H./Solar when he returned from Haj, and passed - in his route - through the holy city of Najaf.

His visit to Najaf coincided with the group immigration of the Ulema of Isfahan to Qum in protest against the compulsory military service, a law that was approved by the order of Reza Shah. In this connection, a secret session was held at the residence of Ayatollah Mirzaye Naiini wherein a group of Ulema, including Ayatollah Borujerdi, took part.

In that session, it was agreed that Ayatollah Borujerdi, as the proxy of Najaf Grand Ayatollahs, Naiini and Ishafahni, travel to Tehran. Later on the matter was dropped and Ayatollah Borujerdi, too, declined to undertake such a task. Then, Ayatollah Borujerdi stayed on at Najaf for a few months before proceeding to Iran via Qasre Shirin border check post where he was arrested and shifted to Tehran's 'Arkan Harb' garrison, a detention center.

In a short time he was found not guilty and released. His release order was issued by Reza Shah on the occasion of his visit to Borujerdi to attend the funeral ceremony of Amir Lashkar Tahmasbi (murdered on 1307 A.H./Solar). It was in that trip that the Tabatabaai Family, which was considered to be very influential in the Lorestan region, requested Reza Shah to liberate the Ayatollah (Tabatabaai) Borujerdi, who belonged to same family.

After his release, Ayatollah Borujerdi met Reza Shah and recommended him to avoid distancing himself from the clergy.

Also, as Ayatollah had closely seen the conditions of the soldiers in 'Arkan Harb' garrison, he had told Reza Shah to increase the ration of the soldiers from serving boiled rice once weekly to twice weekly, because they were 'soldiers of Islam', and this suggestion was much praised by Reza Shah.

Ayatollah Borujerdi then returned to his hometown, Borujerdi, where he stayed on in an isolated manner until the death of Reza Shah due to severe prevailing tyrannical conditions.

When Mohammed Reza Shah succeeded his father, tried to consolidate his royal position and justify his reign by establishing contacts with the religious Ulema, which included a royal visit to the sick Ayatollah Borujerdi in the year 1323 A.H./S in Firoozabadi hospital, Shahre Rey. Ayatollah Borujerdi made some observations, among them he recommended the Shah that there should be no longer any negligence in religious matters.

Earlier, during Reza Shah's time, when Ayatollah Borujerdi was imprisoned, he had proved that was by no means impressed by the royal might.

Also in the event of Reza Shah's deposal in the month of Shahrivar, 1320 A.H./Solar, when Ayatollah Qummi had come to Iran, and the Shah's administration ignored his requests, Ayatollah Borujerdi sent a telegram to Ayatollah Qummi and thereby stated that he was ready to come to Tehran, if necessary. It is said that such a telegram at that time

had been one of the factors that influenced the subsequent acceptance by the government, of Ayatollah Qummi's requests.

Yet, with all his bold encounters, Ayatollah Borujerdi remained wary of politics, in which he intervened only to the extent necessary. With a lifetime of high-level encounters and experience of various events, he remained careful in exercising his political acumen. Moreover, during the 1320s and 1330s of the Solar Hegira calendar, the activists of the 'Tudeh' communist party were making serious efforts in Iran, and at the same time, Iran was under great pressure by foreign governments. Under those circumstances, the Ayatollah considered it rather expedient not to weaken the government of Shah to an extent more than necessary. Thus, Ayatollah Borujerdi's opposition to the Shah was not too overt, in that he did reply appropriately to the royal telegrams, and on occasions complied with royal requests for his audience.

Nonetheless, whenever necessary, the Ayatollah did not hesitate to encounter royalty with firmness, and even sometimes by sending threatening messages.

Such opposition was effective in preventing implementation of some of the governmental plans. For instance, in the year 1338 AH/S, Ayatollah Borujerdi effectively opposed the proposed Latinization of the Persian script.

The Ayatollah, furthermore, supported those who were struggling against the Shah, and he was instrumental in nullifying attempts by Shah's agents to enlist support of the Ulema of Qum against the opposition group of 'Jibheye Melli' and 'Musaddiq (the incumbent Prime Minister)'

SOURCES:

1) MARJAIYYAT DAR ARSEYE IJTIMAA' WA SIAASAT (i.e. Marjaiyyat In The Arena Of Society And Politics), by Sayyid Muhammad Hussain Manzoorul-Ajdad, Shirazeh Publications, Tehran

2) HAYAT UL-IMAM AL-BORUJERDI (i.e. The Biography of Ayatollah Borujerdi), by Muhammad Wa'ez-zadeh Khorasani, Published by 'Majmaye Taqrib Madhaheb Islami', Tehran

Ayatullah Burujerdi (R.A.) story

It has been narrated about the spiritual station of the great *marja*, Ayatullah Muhammad Husein Burujerdi (d.1961), that he had made a vow (*nadhr*) that **if he ever uttered inappropriate words when angry, he**

would fast for a whole year (to train his soul). Indeed, he had a very lofty station.

He himself has said, "Before I came to Qom, I used to hear the voices of angels, but after I arrived here and became occupied and busy in the role of Marja, I lost that blessing!"

Ayatullah Burujerdi was a *marja* whose credentials as a supreme authority have been endorsed by Amir al-Mu'mineen (A.S.) himself. Allamah Nahawandi relates the following incident:

"When the late Ayatullah Burujerdi came to Mashad, I gave him my place in the holy shrine - that is, I asked him to lead the prayers and I stood behind him, out of respect." He continues, "That same year, I was blessed with the opportunity to go to Najaf-al-Ashraf. The great *marja*, Ayatullah Sayyid Abu'l Hasan Isfahani, who was the leader of the prayers in the courtyard of Amir al-Mu'mineen (A.S.), insisted that I lead the prayers. I was very surprised, that a man of the status of Ayatullah Isfahani, to whom even the Imam of our Age (A) had written a letter stating: "*Irkhas Nafsaka* - Make yourself easily accessible to the people - *waj al majlisataka fi al-dahliz* - and sit in the street outside your house (so people can easily benefit from your knowledge) - *waqdhi hawaijan nas* - and fulfil the needs of the people - *nahnu nansuruka* - we will help you - made me stand at the head of the prayers and himself stood behind me."

Allamah Nahawandi says, "I was still wondering as to why a scholar of this great stature was following me in prayer. As I prepared to say the opening *takbir*, I heard the voice of Amir al-Mu'mineen (A.S.)) coming from his sacred tomb, "You showed respect to my son Burujerdi, so we have also honoured and respected you, by making Sayyid Abu'l Hassan Isfahani pray behind you."

Ayatullah Burujerdi had made a vow, in order to train his soul, that if he ever said something unbecoming in anger, he would fast one whole year. One day he was sitting teaching a class in Burujerd. At these times he had a great presence and a special dignity. A student began to argue with him, and Agha answered his query. He raised another objection, which was also answered. However, when he objected a third time, Ayatullah Burujerdi became momentarily angry and with an annoyed tone, he said from the pulpit, "Be quiet, young man".

However, realising what he had done, as soon as Agha finished his class, he called that student and, in front of the whole class, **he bowed and kissed his (student's) hand and gave him a cloak and 500 Tumans (a reasonable amount in those days), and then said, "Forgive the mistake**

of Burujerdi! I do not understand how the reins of my soul slipped from my hands and why I asked you to be quiet in front of everyone."

From the very next day, Ayatullah Burujerdi began to fast - just for one harsh word, which in itself was neither backbiting nor a lie.

Taken from the speech of Haj Agha Hashimi Najhad, as quoted in **"Karamat wa Hikayate Ashiqane Khuda" - "Miracles and Anecdotes of the Close Servants of Allah"**. Translated AJ/091105.

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Chapter 9

Sayed Arif Hussain Al Hussaini - (1946-1988)

BIRTH & FAMILY BACKGROUND

Para Chinar Pekar is a village where **Sayed Arif Hussain al Hussaini** was born on **November 25, 1946**. His childhood was spent in the lanes and by-lanes of the village savoring the shades of the tall trees, climbing the hills and walking along the banks of the river. At a distance of **10 kilometres** from **Para Chinar** is **Pekar** located at an elevation of **6,000 feet** above sea level on **Pakistan-Afghanistan** border. Three tribes inhabit the area—**Ghund Kheel**, **Ali Zayee** and **Daveer Zayee**. **Sayed Arif Hussain al Hussaini** descended from famous **Sufi Saint Sayed Mir Aqil Shah Ashraf Bu Ali Qalandar ibn e Makhroli** of **Daveer Zayee** tribe. **Sayed Arif** was tenth in the line of descent from this **Sufi Saint** who was a scion of **Hussain al Asghar ibn e Imam Zain al Abedin (a.s)**.

On **November 25, 1946**, at the time of the **Adhaan** for the morning-prayer **Sayed Arif Hussain al Hussaini** arrived in this world. It was a very auspicious day for his father, **Sayed Fadl Hussain** that he was endowed with a son who would be known for his learning and piety.

When **Sayed Arif's** age was **5 years**, his parents planned to start his education.. He was admitted to the **Primary School at Pekar**. They also arranged a tutor to teach him the **Holy Quran** at home. For **5 years** **Sayed Arif** studied at the **Pekar school**.. Then he moved to the **High School at Para Chinar** from where he obtained his **Matriculation Certificate**. From his early childhood **Sayed Arif** was very close to his maternal uncle, **Sayed Ghulam Abbas Shah**. Once his mother complained why he spent most of his time with the elders.. He said that he enjoyed listening to the stories of the valorous deeds of his forbears from them.

From early childhood **Sayed Arif** was very punctual at offering his prayers. He used to sleep in his uncle's room and also offered the **Namaz e Shab** along with him. The company of his uncle had such an effect on

his nature that while he was still a child he abhorred the practice of song and dance during marriage functions. After the school hours he used to spend some time playing with his cousins. He liked taking the sheep to graze on the slopes of the hills. He would always take a book along to read while minding the flock.. He used to return home before the **Maghrib Prayer** which he offered along with his uncle. After dinner he would busy himself in his studies. From his early childhood **Sayed Arif** was very jovial and had a good sense of humor. He used to make others laugh with his repartee. At times when someone came from outside and found everyone laughing, he would certainly know that it was **Sayed Arif** who had created the laughter! From his early days he impressed his teachers as a pious, obedient and truthful child. If ever there was a dispute between the students in the class, the teacher would take action on the basis of his evidence. During his entire education days he was never angry or cross with any of his class-mates. In **1962**, when he completed his **Matriculation**, his parents wanted to send him to a degree college. But he was more inclined towards religious education. It was the time when **Haji Ghulam Jafar of Luqman Qeel** had laid the foundation of **Madrasa Jafaria** in **Para Chinar**. In the beginning the **Madrasa** was located in a building of three rooms. **Sayed Arif** was one of the small group of students admitted to the **Madrasa**. The company of the other students and the **Ulema** at the **Madrasa** had a lasting impression on the mind of young **Sayed Arif**. He used to regularly offer the **Tahajjud Prayer** and recite the supplications. **Sayed Arif** had the urge to work for the uplift of the **Karam Agency** where his village **Para Chinar** was situated.

PROCEEDS TO NAJAF E ASHRAF.

. After spending some time in **Para Chinar**, **Sayed Arif Hussaini** thought of proceeding to **Najaf e Ashraf** for further studies. He therefore commenced his journey for the holy place along with his mentor, **Maulana Ghulam Hussain Besuti Hazara**. **Maulana Ghulam Jafar** gave some advice to young **Sayed Arif** about his stay in **Najaf e Ashraf** and also gave him a letter of introduction to a senior student, **Maulana Gul Ali Para Chinar**.

Sayed Arif Hussain left the environs of his village sometime in **1967** and reached **Najaf e Ashraf**. He delivered the letter of his mentor to **Maulana Gul Ali** who received him with warmth and after a few days took him to **Ayatullah Sayed Mohsin Hakim**. **Aqai Mohsin Hakim** was much impressed with the family background of the **Sayed** and his

enthusiasm to pursue his studies. The **Ayatullah** prayed for the success of the young student and assured him of all possible help. The mentors under whom **Sayed Arif Hussaini** studied were: **Aqai Sheik Ashrafi Isfahani**, **Shaheed e Mehrab Ayatullah Hazrat Madani**, **Aqai Lankarani** and **Ayatullah Murtadavi**.

When **Sayed Arif Hussaini** was pursuing his studies with great determination at **Najaf e Ashraf**, **Imam Khomeini** was living a life of exile in the **Holy City**. The **Imam** used to lead the **Maghrib-Isha** prayers at the **Madrasa of Ayatullah Barojardi**. **Sayed Arif Hussaini** was one of the many students who made it a point to attend the prayers there! After the prayers, **Ayatollah Khomeini** used to give talks at the mosque which were of great interest for **Sayed Arif**. On returning to his hostel he used to recapitulate the talk of the great scholar to his hostel-mates and encouraged them to attend the talks of the **Imam**.

RETURNS HOME

Maulana Sayed Arif Hussaini returned home and got married. After some time he again planned to go to **Najaf e Ashraf**. But the **Iraqi Government** refused him entry to the country because of his association with the activities of **Ayatollah Khomeini**. His desire to visit **Najaf e Ashraf** and meet **Ayatollah Khomeini** made the young **Sayed** restless. He therefore proceeded to **Qum** after staying at home for a period of 8 months. There he received instructions in the discipline of **Tareekh e Usool**, **Fiqh** and **Ilm e Kalam** from **Ayatollah Shaheed Murtada Mutahhari**, **Ayatollah Nasir Makarim Shirazi**, **Ayatollah Waheed Khorasani**, **Ayatollah Tabrizi** and **Ayatollah Harm Panahi**. On the advice of **Aqai Harm Panahi** the **Sayed** returned home in 1977 to work for the betterment of the people of the **Karam Agency**. He became very popular with the youth in the area because of his gentle disposition. He always said that a good mentor is a good friend, guide and philosopher! This was the reason that the students fearlessly communicated their problems and concerns to him. They aired their thoughts on the shortcomings of the **Madrasa** and the society in general to their mentor. The **Sayed** used to deliver his talks to the students sitting on the floor. He always propagated the concept of equality. Once he was giving a talk to the students sitting on a chair. The students too were on chairs listening with interest to his talk when a few more students entered the class and squatted down because there were no vacant chairs available. Seeing this, **Sayed Arif** descended from his chair to the ground and continued his talk. The

students sitting on the chairs too emulated their mentor and they squatted down to listen to the talk!

The whole day **Sayed Arif** spent giving talks to different groups of students. In the evenings he used to visit the students at their hostels to inquire about their welfare. One evening he went to a student's room and found him groaning under the effect of high fever. The student had no room-mate with him at that time. The mentor sat near the student and pressed his head to soothe him. When the other students entered the room, they were much impressed to see the mentor nursing his sick student. The **Sayed** always treated his students kindly and with affection. He used to distribute half of his meager emoluments to the needy students.

It was the wish of **Sayed Arif** to enhance the repute of the **Madaris Diniya**. He used to tell to his friends and the teachers to train the students in such a manner that they didn't just remain the **Pesh Namaz (leaders of the Congregations)** but rose to important positions in the service of the country. He therefore elevated the standards of the **Madrasa Jafaria Para Chinar** to a very high level. He used to say that an **Alim e Deen** has to keep an eye on the circumstances in the society and to reform the people. The blame for the ills in any society squarely rests on the **Ulema** there. **Allama Sayed Arif Hussaini** was becoming very popular with the people in the **Karm Agency** area, although the **Political Agent** was very strong and the **Maliks** were ruling with an iron fist. When his movement gained strength, **Sayed Arif Hussaini** advised the youth of the **Alamdard Federation** that in **Karm Agency**, and particularly in **Para Chinar**, they should start social service activities. He particularly insisted on the abolition of the habit of the use of intoxicants. He got a hospital established and provided facilities for the rehabilitation of the youths who had become compulsive users of intoxicants. He also devised a program to combat unemployment rampant among the youth in the area. He constituted a local **Bayt al Maal** and raised donations from the locals and also people residing in other countries. People contributed wholeheartedly to the fund that provided succor to the widows and the orphans in the area. It started giving scholarships to the deserving needy students and provided money for the marriages of poor girls. His close disciples say that **Sayed Arif Hussaini** used to visit the homes of the needy in the dark nights to leave provisions and money at their door steps. He used to tell his disciples not to say a word about this activity to others. Once a disciple asked him why he didn't introduce himself to the beneficiaries of his help during the nightly visits of distribution, the

mentor said, “. **Hazrat Ali (a.s)** used to regularly visit the hut of a blind person near **Koofa** to give him food and sweep the place. On **22nd Ramadan** when a person passed that way, he found the blind person wailing: ‘ O my benefactor! I am hungry since the last three days!’ What did he know that on the **19th of Ramadan** his great benefactor was struck by the enemy’s sword and on **21st Ramadan** he had departed from the world!” After relating the incident **Sayed Arif Hussaini**’s eyes watered and he said, “I feel contentment when I follow the foot-steps of my forbears!” His thoughts and activities attracted the people of the **Karm Agency** and the tribals started flocking to him for the solution of their problems. Once the **Iranian Foreign Minister, Aqai Wilayat**i, visited **Peshawar** when **Sayed Arif Hussaini**, along with thousands of people from **Karm Agency**, gave him a befitting reception. . At that time an important delegation asked **Aqai Wilayat**i to get **Sayed Arif** appointed as the representative of **Aqai Khomeini** in **Peshawar**. When **Aqai Wilayat**i mentioned this to **Sayed Arif Hussaini**, he said that the conditions in **Karm Agency** were such that he couldn’t possibly move away from there. He said that whenever he had an opportunity he did visit **Peshawar** but it wasn’t possible for him to move there on a permanent basis.

Sayed Arif Hussaini made plans for the establishment of a good hospital and a public school in **Para Chinar**. **Dr Abid Hussain** extended his full support to the **Sayed**’s efforts and the people of **Para Chinar** donated a good piece of land for the construction of the school.

SOME ACHIEVEMENTS OF SAYED ARIF AL hUSSAINI

Once, two days prior to **Idd al Adha**, **Sayed Arif Hussain** returned to **Peshawar** after a tour of some important city. He called **Abbas**, the cheauffer, and gave him **Rs 500** to go to the bazaar and buy some materials for taking to his mother in **Para Chinar**. After giving the money to the person he retired to his room for rest. **Abbass** sat for a while in the **Madrasa** brooding that the master hadn’t given him his wages for the past two months and even he hadn’t given him any money for the ensuing **Idd**. He sat brooding on the steps of the building that he had no money to buy anything for his children for the celebration of the **Idd**. He wondered from whom he could get a loan to meet his urgent need. He then thought that he would go to the secretary of the **Madrasa** to ask for a **Rs 2,000** loan with a promise that he would give back the money after he got his outstanding wages. The driver was immersed in his thoughts when he heard the foot-steps of someone descending the staircase. He

saw that **Sayed Arif Hussaini** was coming down the stairs. He took out some money from his pocket and gave him and said that he should do some shopping for the **Idd** for his children!

Abbas also related that once **Allama Arif Hussaini** was in proceeding to **Para Chinari** to celebrate the **Idd** with his children. Those days it rained heavily and there were floods in the **Karm Agency**. A big stream was flowing furiously a few miles from **Para Chinari** that had obstructed the flow of the traffic. On both sides of the stream many vehicles were stranded. . Hundreds of persons were eagerly waiting to reach their destinations for the **Idd**. Observing this the driver, **Abbas**, too was worried. At that moment **Sayed Arif Hussain** asked him to step into the stream and gauge its depth and flow. After the inspection **Abbas** said that it would be impossible to negotiate the stream in the car. The **Sayed** thought for some time and told **Abbas** to say **Bismillah** and continue the journey. When he brought the car to the bank of the stream the people waiting there pleaded not to embark on the hazardous adventure. They said that the car would be washed away by the furious waves of the flood. After a while **Abbas** looked at his master in desperation. But **Sayed Arif** had his eyes closed and was reciting some verses. **Abbas** says that he felt that someone picked up the car and put it on the other side of the stream!

MARTYRDOM—MY INHERITANCE

.**Allama Sayed Arif Hussain al Hussaini** was martyred on the morning of **August 15, 1988** at the **Madrasa Jameat al Aarif al Islamia, Peshawar**. Although he was elevated to the august status of martyrdom, the Community lost an enlightened, pious and dedicated leader. After completing his morning prayers, the **Sayed** went to the upper floor of the building when the **Ibn e Muljim** of the time stealthily crept up to shed his innocent blood. The man was crouching on the staircase when the **Sayed** was climbing down. The fiend fired with his pistol on the chest of his victim and fled the scene. **Allama Sayed Javed**, who was performing the ablution on the higher floor, heard the thud of someone falling down. He hurried down to find the **Sayed** in a state of **Tashhahud**. He thought that the **Sayed** had fallen down the staircase. He took hold of him and tried to raise him up. But to his dismay he noticed blood gushing out from the **Sayed's** chest. He started beating his head and shouted that the Community had been orphaned. One of the students of the **Madrasa**, **Sayed Tauseef Haider**, had seen the culprit running away from the scene of the crime. The other persons too rushed

out of their rooms and found their mentor fatally injured. They couldn't control their emotions and started beating their heads and chests. The **Sayed** looked at the walls of the building with feeling of adieus and looked ready for departure from the transient world. He was rushed to the **Lady Reading Hospital** where he breathed his last!

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Chapter 10

Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Muhsin al-Tabataba'i al-Hakim - (1889–1970)

With the success of the Bolsheviks in Russia, the Red movement started to gain extensive support around the world. Particularly in the Middle East, many Muslims saw communism as the solution to all their socio-economic woes, and communist parties around the Arab world began to attract massive numbers of disenfranchised youth, especially in Iraq. And yet, the disastrous results of communism were already foreseen by a seemingly out-of-touch old cleric living and teaching in the Shia seminary of Najaf, whose religious edict declaring communism equivalent to *Shirk* and *Kufr* (polytheism and disbelief) marked the end of communism in Iraq.

He was born Sayyid Mohsin ibn Sayyid Mahdi Tabatabai al-Hakim to a scholarly family in the holy city of Najaf in 1306 AH. He received his religious education in Najaf, studying under such great giants of the seminary as Akhund al-Khurasani, Sayyid Abul Hasan al-Isfahani, Sayyid Kadhim Tabatabai Yazdi, and Shaikh Muhammad Hussain Naini. Upon the demise of his teachers, Sayyid Mohsin al-Hakim was recognized as the de facto leader of the Najaf seminary, and upon Ayatollah Burujardi's death in 1380 AH, he was accepted as the sole *Marja Taqleed* (Religious Authority) by Shias around the world.

Under Ayatollah Mohsin al-Hakim, the seminary grew extensively. He embarked on a program to collect various books and manuscripts that had hitherto been ignored or disorganized, culminating in his famous library containing over 30,000 books and nearly 5,000 various manuscripts. It is said that in times of financial shortage, Ayatollah Mohsin al-Hakim used to offer the prayers and fasts for diseased individuals and would use that money to buy these books and manuscripts from their owners. He also established several new religious schools, including the Madressa Sharif al-Ulema in Karbala, Madressas Sayyid Yazdi, Dar al-Hikma, and Ilmiya in Najaf, Madressa Ilmiya in Hilla, as

During his time, the seminary increased its international outreach efforts, and Ayatollah Mohsin al-Hakim used the seminary's financial resources to establish mosques, Hussainiyas, and Islamic cultural centers all over Iraq, as well as in places like Lebanon, Syria, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. His code of practice and hundreds of Islamic books was published in local languages such as Urdu and Pashto and made easily accessible to the masses in these places for the first time.

Like Ayatollah Burujardi, Ayatollah Mohsin al-Hakim (and later, Ayatollah Abul Qasim al-Khoei) is accused of maintaining a "quietist" attitude during this period. However, one must remember that his religious leadership occurred during some very turbulent times. Revolutions do not take place overnight, and Ayatollah Mohsin al-Hakim recognized that in order to effectively counter the Ba'ath Party in the long run, there must be a dedicated group of scholars and jurists to lead the masses. Therefore, he let Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr be in charge of the resistance movement, whereas he himself concentrating on producing the next great crop of Shia academia. Indeed, many of his students and at least six of his sons were brutally persecuted and subsequently killed by the Ba'ath regime. Today, the influential Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC) is led by Sayyid Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, one of Ayatollah Mohsin al-Hakim's sons.

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the Tabatabai, renowned for its scholarship. He was always in the forefront to defend Islam and Muslims. He became the sole Marja in 1961 after the death of Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Husayn Borujerdi. His son Abdul Aziz al-Hakim was the leader of SIIC the largest political party in Iraq.

Activities in Hawza Ilmiyya, Najaf

The hawza of Najaf grew immensely under his Marjaiyya. His historic opinion piece (although, not an official fatwa), branding communism as kufr and atheism proved the beginning of the end of communism in Iraq.

Muhsin Al-Hakim led the hawza, also known as the marja'iyya, the group of Shi'i scholars based in Najaf responsible for determining Shi'i religious doctrine, during a time of considerable tumult in Iraq. Communism had enveloped the south of Iraq, Iraqi nationalist parties (and most prominently the pan-Arabist Ba'ath party) were largely in control of Iraq's political institutions, particularly during the last decade of Hakim's life. It is important to note, however, that the hawza is not a papacy and that therefore "leading" it does not mean that Hakim alone could pronounce Shi'i doctrine, all members of the hawza of sufficient standing (namely, those given the title absolute interpreter, or mujtahid mutlaq) developed their own rules based on accepted techniques and practices. Hakim was simply the most respected of the relatively small group of scholars.

Political Stances

Hakim's general stance with respect to all of these movements, in contradistinction to those of his children, who later became extraordinarily active politically, was one of quietism. In fact, Shi'i quietism, later exemplified by hawza leaders such as Grand Ayatollah Abul Qasim al-Khoei and current Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, probably reached its apotheosis in Iraq during Hakim's tenure. Thus, while Hakim did attempt to limit Communist influence among the Shi'a by banning their participation in the party, for the most part he preferred to remain out of politics, at least tacitly agreeing with Baghdad's rulers to keep the hawza's scholars politically neutral in exchange for relative immunity for those scholars. Implicit in this stance was a certain alienation and disaffection with the notion of the modern nation state and the exercise of political authority. The state, and politics, were assumed to be inherently sullyng, and something which good Shi'is should avoid. Quietism is thus not secularism, where the state and religion are presumed to have important, but

separate, spheres of influence, but rather a type of devotion to the religious authorities and suspicion of political ones. Politics and religion would then be united once again after the return of the hidden Mahdi, now disappeared for over a millennium. The Mahdi is a lineal descendant of the Prophet Muhammad who is the Imam in Shi'i theology, an infallible individual in whom political and religious authority for the Muslim community is vested and who will ultimately bring justice to the world with his reappearance under Shi'i eschatological theory.

Other Point of View

There were some within the hawza who were less enamored of Hakim's stance respecting political authority. Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, for example, a more junior member of the hawza during Hakim's time, sought a series of reforms to the hawza to make it more politically palatable and appealing to the Shi'i masses who were proving susceptible to Communism. Sadr therefore tried to unify and centralize the hawza, placing more power in the hands of the senior scholar, and sought to make its materials more accessible and understandable to the lay community, filled as it was with arcane and obscure language, often on minutiae of no interest to the broader Shi'i masses. He helped found the Da'wa party as well, an Islamist party that Sadr imagined would give the hawza political influence in Baghdad.

While Hakim had a great deal of respect for the intelligence and enthusiasm of Sadr, he viewed his political activism as contrary to its principles and interests. Hakim therefore asked Sadr to dissociate his relationship with Da'wa and generally discouraged his efforts to reform large parts of the hawza curriculum, though some important reforms were undertaken. Hakim therefore maintained the quietist balance through very difficult times, and ultimately projected a stance on politics and religion in the Shi'i community that remains influential today.

With Hakim's death, Sadr's activism increased and ultimately his ideas proved too threatening to the Saddam and his government. In 1980, he and his sister were killed by Saddam Hussein's interrogators, as were any members of the hawza who were inclined to take Sadr's politically active position. With the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime, however, Shi'ism has reached a considerable period of ferment, with the religious community attempting to achieve some form of balance between the political activism announced by Sadr and the quietist stance embodied most clearly in the form of Muhsin al-Hakim.

He was buried in the great and modern library he had established.

Chapter 1

Ayatullah Murtadha Mutahhari - (1920-1979)

Ayatullāh Murṭadhā Muṭahharī, one of the principle architects of the new Islāmic consciousness in Iran, was born on February 2nd, 1920, in Farīmān, then a village and now a township about sixty kilometres from Mashhad, the great centre of Shī'a pilgrimage and learning in Eastern Iran.[18]

His father was Muhammad Ḥusāin Muṭahharī, a renown scholar who studied in Najaf and spent several years in Egypt and the Hijāz before returning to Farīmān. The elder Muṭahharī was of a different caste of mind than his son, who in any event came to outshine him. The father was devoted to the works of the celebrated traditionalist, Mullāh Muhammad Bāqir Majlisī; whereas the son's great hero among the Shī'a scholars of the past was the theosophist Mullā Sadrā.

Nonetheless, Āyatullāh Muṭahharī always retained great respect and affection for his father, who was also his first teacher, and he dedicated to him one of his most popular books, *Dastān-e-Rastān* ("The Epic of the Righteous"), first published in 1960, and which was later chosen as book of the year by the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO in 1965.

At the exceptionally early age of twelve, Muṭahharī began his formal religious studies at the teaching institution in Mashhad, which was then in a state of decline, partly because of internal reasons and partly because of the repressive measures directed by Ridhā Khān, the first Pahlavī autocrat, against all Islāmic institutions. But in Mashhad, Muṭahharī discovered his great love for philosophy, theology, and mysticism, a love that remained with him throughout his life and came to shape his entire outlook on religion:

"I can remember that when I began my studies in Mashhad and was still engaged in learning elementary Arabic, the philosophers, mystics, and theologians impressed me far more than other scholars and scientists, such as inventors and explorers. Naturally I was not yet acquainted with their ideas, but I regarded them as heroes on the stage of thought."[19]

Accordingly, the figure in Mashhad who aroused the greatest devotion in Muḩahharī was Mīrzā Mahdī Shahīdī Razavī, a teacher of philosophy. But Razavī died in 1936, before Muḩahharī was old enough to participate in his classes, and partly because of this reason he left Mashhad the following year to join the growing number of students congregating in the teaching institution in Qum.

Thanks to the skillful stewardship of Shaykh `Abdul Karīm Hā'irī, Qum was on its way to becoming the spiritual and intellectual capital of Islāmic Iran, and Muḩahharī was able to benefit there from the instruction of a wide range of scholars. He studied Fiqh and Uṣūl - the core subjects of the traditional curriculum - with Āyatullāh Ḥujjat Kuhkamārī, Āyatullāh Sayyid Muhammad Dāmād, Āyatullāh Sayyid Muhammad Ridhā Gulpāyagānī, and Ḥajj Sayyid Ṣadr al-Dīn as-Ṣadr. But more important than all these was Āyatullāh Burujerdī, the successor of Hā'irī as director of the teaching establishment in Qum. Muḩahharī attended his lectures from his arrival in Qum in 1944 until his departure for Tehran in 1952, and he nourished a deep respect for him.

Fervent devotion and close affinity characterized Muḩahharī's relationship with his prime mentor in Qum, Āyatullāh Rūhullāh Khumaynī. When Muḩahharī arrived in Qum, Āyatullāh Khumaynī was a young lecturer, but he was already marked out from his contemporaries by the profoundness and comprehensiveness of his Islāmic vision and his ability to convey it to others. These qualities were manifested in the celebrated lectures on ethics that he began giving in Qum in the early 1930s. The lectures attracted a wide audience from outside as well as inside the religious teaching institution and had a profound impact on all those who attended them. Muḩahharī made his first acquaintance with Āyatullah Khumaynī at these lectures:

"When I migrated to Qum, I found the object of my desire in a personality who possessed all the attributes of Mīrzā Mahdī (Shahīdī Razavī) in addition to others that were peculiarly his own. I realized that the thirst of my spirit would be quenched at the pure spring of that personality. Although I had still not completed the preliminary stages of my studies and was not yet qualified to embark on the study of the rational sciences (ma`qulāt), the lectures on ethics given by that beloved personality every Thursday and Friday were not restricted to ethics in the dry, academic sense but dealt with gnosis and spiritual wayfaring, and thus, they intoxicated me. I can say without exaggeration that those lectures aroused in me such ecstasy that their effect remained with me until the following Monday or Tuesday. An important part of my intellectual and

spiritual personality took shape under the influence of those lectures and the other classes I took over a period of twelve years with that spiritual master (ustād-i ilahī) [meaning Āyatullāh Khumaynī].”[20]

In about 1946, Āyatullāh Khumaynī began lecturing to a small group of students that included both Muḥahharī and his roommate at the Fayziya Madressah, Āyatullāh Muntazarī, on two key philosophical texts, the *Asfar al-Arba`a* of Mullā Ṣadra and the *Sharh-e-Manzuma* of Mullā Hādī Sabzwārī. Muḥahharī’s participation in this group, which continued to meet until about 1951, enabled him to establish more intimate links with his teacher.

Also in 1946, at the urging of Muḥahharī and Muntazarī, the Āyatullāh Khumaynī taught his first formal course on Fiqh and Uṣūl, taking the chapter on rational proofs from the second volume of Akhund Khurāsānī’s *Kifāyat al-Uṣūl* as his teaching text. Muḥahharī followed his course assiduously, while still pursuing his studies of Fiqh with Āyatullāh Burūjerdī.

In the first two post-war decades, Āyatullāh Khumaynī trained numerous students in Qum who became leaders of the Islāmic Revolution and the Islāmic Republic, such that through them (as well as directly), the imprint of his personality was visible on all the key developments of the past decade. But none among his students bore to Āyatullāh Khumaynī the same relationship of affinity as Muḥahharī, an affinity to which the Āyatullāh Khumaynī himself has borne witness to. The pupil and master shared a profound attachment to all aspects of traditional scholarship, without in any way being its captive; a comprehensive vision of Islām as a total system of life and belief, with particular importance ascribed to its philosophical and mystical aspects; an absolute loyalty to the religious institution, tempered by an awareness of the necessity of reform; a desire for comprehensive social and political change, accompanied by a great sense of strategy and timing; and an ability to reach out beyond the circle of the traditionally religious, and gain the attention and loyalty of the secularly educated.

Among the other teachers whose influence Muḥahharī was exposed to in Qum, was the great exegete of the Qur’ān and philosopher, Āyatullāh Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusain Ṭabāṭabā’ī. Muḥahharī participated in both Ṭabāṭabā’ī’s classes on the *Shifā`* of Abū `Alī Sīnā from 1950 to 1953, and the Thursday evening meetings that took place under his direction. The subject of these meetings was materialist philosophy, a remarkable choice for a group of traditional scholars. Muḥahharī himself had first conceived a critical interest in materialist philosophy, especially

Marxism, soon after embarking on the formal study of the rational sciences.

According to his own recollections, in about 1946 he began to study the Persian translations of Marxist literature published by the Tudeh party, the major Marxist organization in Iran and at that time an important force in the political scene. In addition, he read the writings of Taqī Arānī, the main theoretician of the Tudeh party, as well as Marxist publications in `Arabic emanating from Egypt. At first he had some difficulty understanding these texts because he was not acquainted with modern philosophical terminology, but with continued exertion (which included the drawing up of a synopsis of Georges Pultzer's *Elementary Principles of Philosophy*), he came to master the whole subject of materialist philosophy. This mastery made him an important contributor to Ĥ-abā'fabāī's circle and later, after his move to Tehran, an effective combatant in the ideological war against Marxism and Marxist-influenced interpretations of Islām.

Numerous refutations of Marxism have been essayed in the Islāmic world, both in Iran and elsewhere, but almost all of them fail to go beyond the obvious incompatibilities of Marxism with religious belief and the political failures and inconsistencies of Marxist political parties. Muḥahharī, by contrast, went to the philosophical roots of the matter and demonstrated with rigorous logic the contradictory and arbitrarily hypothetic nature of key principles of Marxism. His polemical writings are characterized more by intellectual than rhetorical or emotional force.

However, for Muḥahharī, philosophy was far more than a polemical tool or intellectual discipline; it was a particular style of religiosity, a way of understanding and formulating Islām. Muḥahharī belongs, in fact, to the tradition of Shī'a philosophical concern that goes back at least as far as Nasīr ad-Dīn Ĥuṣī, one of Muḥahharī's personal heroes. To say that Muḥahharī's view of Islām was philosophical is not to imply that he lacked spirituality or was determined to subordinate revealed dogma to philosophical interpretation and to impose philosophical terminology on all domains of religious concern; rather it means that he viewed the attainment of knowledge and understanding as the prime goal and benefit of religion and for that reason assigned to philosophy a certain primacy among the disciplines cultivated in the religious institution. In this he was at variance with those numerous scholars for whom Fiqh was the be-all and end-all of the curriculum, with modernists for whom philosophy represented a Hellenistic intrusion into the world of

Islām, and with all those whom revolutionary ardour had made impatient with careful philosophical thought.[21]

The particular school of philosophy to which Muḩahharī adhered was that of Mullā Ṣadrā, the “sublime philosophy” (hikmat-i muta`āliya) that seeks to combine the methods of spiritual insight with those of philosophical deduction. Muḩahharī was a man of tranquil and serene disposition, both in his general comportment and in his writings. Even when engaged in polemics, he was invariably courteous and usually refrained from emotive and ironical wording. But such was his devotion to Mullā Ṣadrā that he would passionately defend him even against slight or incidental criticism, and he chose for his first grandchild - as well as for the publishing house in Qum that put out his books - the name Ṣadrā.

Insofar as Ṣadrā’s school of philosophy attempts to merge the methods of inward illumination and intellectual reflection, it is not surprising that it has been subject to varying interpretations on the part of those more inclined to one method than the other. To judge from his writings, Muḩahharī belonged to those for whom the intellectual dimension of Ṣadrā’s school was predominant; there is little of the mystical or markedly spiritual tone found in other exponents of Ṣadrā’s thought, perhaps because Muḩahharī viewed his own inward experiences as irrelevant to the task of instruction in which he was engaged or even as an intimate secret he should conceal. More likely, however, this predilection for the strictly philosophical dimension of the “sublime philosophy” was an expression of Muḩahharī’s own temperament and genius. In this respect, he differed profoundly from his great mentor, Āyatullāh Khumaynī, many of whose political pronouncements continue to be suffused with the language and concerns of mysticism and spirituality.

In 1952, Muḩahharī left Qum for Tehran, where he married the daughter of Āyatullāh Rūhānī and began teaching philosophy at the Madressah Marwi, one of the principal institutions of religious learning in the capital. This was not the beginning of his teaching career, for already in Qum he had begun to teach certain subjects - logic, philosophy, theology, and Fiqh - while still a student himself. But Muḩahharī seems to have become progressively impatient with the somewhat restricted atmosphere of Qum, with the factionalism prevailing among some of the students and their teachers, and with their remoteness from the concerns of society. His own future prospects in Qum were also uncertain.

In Tehran, Muḩahharī found a broader and more satisfying field of religious, educational, and ultimately political activity. In 1954, he was invited to teach philosophy at the Faculty of Theology and Islāmic Sciences of Tehran University, where he taught for twenty-two years. First the regularization of his appointment and then his promotion to professor was delayed by the jealousy of mediocre colleagues and by political considerations (for Muḩahharī's closeness to Āyatullāh Khumaynī was well known).

But the presence of a figure such as Muḩahharī in the secular university was significant and effective. Many men of Madressah background had come to teach in the universities, and they were often of great erudition. However, almost without exception they had discarded an Islāmic worldview, together with their turbans and cloaks. Muḩahharī, by contrast, came to the university as an articulate and convinced exponent of Islāmic science and wisdom, almost as an envoy of the religious institution to the secularly educated. Numerous people responded to him, as the pedagogical powers he had first displayed in Qum now fully unfolded.

In addition to building his reputation as a popular and effective university lecturer, Muḩahharī participated in the activities of the numerous professional Islāmic associations (*anjumanhā*) that had come into being under the supervision of Mahdī Bāzārgān and Āyatullāh Taleqānī, lecturing to their doctors, engineers, teachers and helping to coordinate their work. A number of Muḩahharī's books in fact consist of the revised transcripts of series of lectures delivered to the Islāmic associations.

Muḩahharī's wishes for a wider diffusion of religious knowledge in society and a more effective engagement of religious scholars in social affairs led him in 1960 to assume the leadership of a group of Tehran `Ulamā known as the *Anjuman-e-Mahāna-yi Dīnī* ("The Monthly Religious Society"). The members of this group, which included the late Āyatullāh Beheshtī, a fellow-student of Muḩahharī in Qum, organized monthly public lectures designed simultaneously to demonstrate the relevance of Islām to contemporary concerns, and to stimulate reformist thinking among the `Ulamā. The lectures were printed under the title of *Guftār-e-Māh* ("Discourse of the Month") and proved very popular, but the government banned them in March 1963 when Āyatullāh Khumaynī began his public denunciation of the Pahlavī regime.

A far more important venture in 1965 of the same kind was the foundation of the *Ħusayniya-e-Irshād*, an institution in north

Tehran, designed to gain the allegiance of the secularly educated young to Islām. Muṭahharī was among the members of the directing board; he also lectured at the Ĥusayniya-e-Irshād and edited and contributed to several of its publications. The institution was able to draw huge crowds to its functions, but this success - which without doubt exceeded the hopes of the founders, was overshadowed by a number of internal problems. One such problem was the political context of the institution's activities, which gave rise to differing opinions on the opportuneness of going beyond reformist lecturing to political confrontation.

The spoken word plays in general a more effective and immediate role in promoting revolutionary change than the written word, and it would be possible to compose an anthology of key sermons, addresses, and lectures that have carried the Islāmic Revolution of Iran forward. But the clarification of the ideological content of the revolution and its demarcation from opposing or competing schools of thought have necessarily depended on the written word, on the composition of works that expound Islāmic doctrine in systematic form, with particular attention to contemporary problems and concerns. In this area, Muṭahharī's contribution was unique in its volume and scope. Muṭahharī wrote assiduously and continuously, from his student days in Qum up to 1979 the year of his martyrdom. Much of his output was marked by the same philosophical tone and emphasis already noted, and he probably regarded as his most important work Uṣūl-e-Falsafa wa Ravish-e-Ri'ālism ("The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism"), the record of Ṭabāṭabāī's discourses to the Thursday evening circle in Qum, supplemented with Muṭahharī's comments. But he did not choose the topics of his books in accordance with personal interest or predilection, but with his perception of need; wherever a book was lacking on some vital topic of contemporary Islāmic interest, Muṭahharī sought to supply it.

Single handily, he set about constructing the main elements of a contemporary Islāmic library. Books such as `Adl-e-Ilāhī ("Divine Justice"), Nizām-e-Ĥuquq-e-Zan dar Islām ("The System of Women's Rights in Islām"), Mas'ala-yi Ĥijāb ("The Question of the Veil"), Ashnā'i ba `Ulūm-e-Islāmī ("An Introduction to the Islāmic Sciences"), and Muqaddima bar Jahānbīnī-yi Islāmi ("An Introduction to the Worldview of Islām") were all intended to fill a need, to contribute to an accurate and systematic understanding of Islām and the problems in the Islāmic society.

These books may well come to be regarded as Muḩahharī's most lasting and important contribution to the rebirth of Islāmic Iran, but his activity also had a political dimension that admittedly subordinate, should not be overlooked. While a student and fledgling teacher in Qum, he had sought to instill political consciousness in his contemporaries and was particularly close to those among them who were members of the Fida'īyan-i Islām, the Militant Organization founded in 1945 by Nawwab Safawī.

The Qum headquarters of the Fida'īyan was the Madrasa-yi Fayziya, where Muḩahharī himself resided, and he sought in vain to prevent them from being removed from the Madressah by Āyatullāh Burūjerdī, who was resolutely set against all political confrontation with the Shah's regime.

During the struggle for the nationalization of the Iranian Oil Industry, Muḩahharī sympathized with the efforts of Āyatullāh Kāshānī and Dr. Muhammad Musaddiq, although he criticized the latter for his adherence to secular nationalism. After his move to Tehran, Muḩahharī collaborated with the Freedom Movement of Bāzārgān and Taleqānī, but never became one of the leading figures in the group.

His first serious confrontation with the Shah's regime came during the uprising of Khurdad 15th, 1342/June 6th, 1963, when he showed himself to be politically, as well as intellectually, a follower of Āyatullāh Khumaynī by distributing his declarations and urging support for him in the sermons he gave.[22]

He was accordingly arrested and held for forty-three days. After his release, he participated actively in the various organizations that came into being to maintain the momentum that had been created by the uprising, most importantly the Association of Militant Religious Scholars (Jami'a yi Ruhāniyāt-e-Mubāriz). In November 1964, Āyatullāh Khumaynī entered on his fourteen years of exile, spent first in Turkey and then in Najaf, and throughout this period Muḩahharī remained in touch with Āyatullāh Khumaynī, both directly - by visits to Najaf - and indirectly.

When the Islāmic Revolution approached its triumphant climax in the winter of 1978 and Āyatullāh Khumaynī left Najaf for Paris, Muḩahharī was among those who travelled to Paris to meet and consult with him. His closeness to Āyatullāh Khumaynī was confirmed by his appointment to the Council of the Islāmic Revolution, the existence of which Āyatullāh Khumaynī announced on January 12th, 1979.

Muḥahharī's services to the Islāmic Revolution were brutally curtailed by his assassination on May 1st, 1979. The murder was carried out by a group known as Furqān, which claimed to be the protagonists of a "progressive Islām," one freed from the allegedly distorting influence of the religious scholars. Although Muḥahharī appears to have been chairman of the Council of the Islāmic Revolution at the time of his assassination, it was as a thinker and a writer that he was martyred.

In 1972, Muḥahharī published a book entitled *ʿIllal-i Girayish ba Maddigarī* ("Reasons for the Turn to Materialism"), an important work analyzing the historical background of materialism in Europe and Iran. During the revolution, he wrote an introduction to the eighth edition of this book, attacking distortions of the thought of Ḥafiz and Hallaj that had become fashionable in some segments of Irānian society and refuting certain materialistic interpretations of the Qur'ān. The source of the interpretations was the Furqān group, which sought to deny fundamental Qur'ānic concepts such as the divine transcendence and the reality of the hereafter. As always in such cases, Muḥahharī's tone was persuasive and solicitous, not angry or condemnatory, and he even invited a response from Furqān and other interested parties to comment on what he had written. Their only response was the gun.

The threat to assassinate all who opposed them was already contained in the publications of Furqān, and after the publication of the new edition of *ʿIllal-e-Girayish ba Maddigarī*, Muḥahharī apparently had some premonition of his martyrdom. According to the testimony of his son, Muḥtabā, a kind of detachment from worldly concerns became visible in him; he augmented his nightly prayers and readings of the Qur'ān, and he once dreamed that he was in the presence of the Prophet (S), together with Āyatullāh Khumaynī.

On Tuesday, May 1st, 1979 Muḥahharī went to the house of Dr. Yadullāh Sahābī, in the company of other members of the Council of the Islāmic Revolution. At about 10:30 at night, he and another participant in the meeting, Engineer Katira'i, left Sahābī's house. Walking by himself to an adjacent alley where the car that was to take him home was parked, Muḥahharī suddenly heard an unknown voice call out to him. He looked around to see where the voice was coming from, and as he did, a bullet struck him in the head, entering beneath the right earlobe and exiting above the left eyebrow. He died almost instantly, and although he was rushed to a nearby hospital, there was nothing that could be done but mourn for him. The body was left in the hospital the following day, and then on Thursday, amid widespread mourning, it was

taken for funeral prayers first to Tehran University and then to Qum for burial, next to the grave of Shaykh `Abdul Karīm Hā'irī .

Āyatullāh Khumaynī wept openly when Muḥahharī was buried in Qum, and he described him as his “dear son,” and as “the fruit of my life,” and as “a part of my flesh.” But in his eulogy Āyatullāh Khumaynī also pointed out that with the murder of Muḥahharī neither his personality was diminished, nor was the course of the revolution interrupted:

“Let the evil-wishers know that with the departure of Muḥahharī - his Islāmic personality, his philosophy and learning, have not left us. Assassinations cannot destroy the Islāmic personality of the great men of Islām...Islām grows through sacrifice and martyrdom of its cherished ones. From the time of its revelation up to the present time, Islām has always been accompanied by martyrdom and heroism.”[23]

The personage and legacy of Āyatullāh Muḥahharī have certainly remained unforgotten in the Islāmic Republic, to such a degree that his posthumous presence has been almost as impressive as the attainments of his life. The anniversary of his martyrdom is regularly commemorated, and his portrait is ubiquitous throughout Iran. Many of his unpublished writings are being printed for the first time, and the whole corpus of his work is now being distributed and studied on a massive scale. In the words of Āyatullāh Khamene'ī, President of the Republic, the works of Muḥahharī have come to constitute “the intellectual infrastructure of the Islāmic Republic.”

Efforts are accordingly under way to promote a knowledge of Muḥahharī's writings outside the Persian-speaking world as well, and the Ministry of Islāmic Guidance has sponsored translations of his works into languages as diverse as Spanish and Malay.

In a sense, however, it will be the most fitting memorial to Muḥahharī if revolutionary Iran proves able to construct a polity, society, economy and culture that are authentically and integrally Islāmic. For Muḥahharī's life was oriented to a goal that transcended individual motivation, and his martyrdom was the final expression of that effacement of self.

Notes:

[18]This sketch of the life and works of Āyatullāh Muḥahharī is based chiefly on Muhammad Wa'izzāda Khurāsānī's, “Sayrī dar Zindagi-yi `Ilmī wa Inqilābīyi Ustad Shahīd Murtadhā Muḥahharī,” in Yadnāma-yi Ustād Shahīd Murtadhā Muḥahharī, ed. `Abdul Karīm Surūsh, Tehran, 1360 Sh./1981, pp. 319-380, an article rich in information on many

aspects of the recent history of Islāmic Irān. Reference has also been made to Muḡtabā Muḡahhari, "Zindagi-yi Pidaram," in Harakat (journal of the students at the Tehran Faculty of Theology), no. 1 (n.d.), pp. 5-16; M. Hoda, In Memory of Martyr Muḡahhari, a pamphlet published by the Ministry of Islāmic Guidance, Tehran, April, 1982; and Āyatullāh Muḡahhari's autobiographical introduction to the eighth edition of `Ilal-i Girayish ba Maddīgarī; Qum, 1357 Sh./1978, pp. 7ff.

[19] `Ilal-e-Girayish ba Maddīgarī, Page 9.

[20] `Ilal-i Girayish ba Maddigari, Page 9.

[21] The authoritative statement of this view was made by Sayyid Qutb in his Khasā'is al-Tasawwur al-Islāmī wa Muqawwimatuhu, Cairo, numerous editions, which was translated into Persian and had some influence on views toward philosophy.

[22] Muhahhari's name comes ninth in a list of clerical detainees prepared by the military prosecutor's office in June, 1963. See facsimile of the list in Dihnavi, Qiyam-e-Khunun-i 15 Khurdad 42 ba Rivāyat-e-Asnād, Tehran, 1360 Sh./1981, Page 77.

[23] Text of Āyatullāh Khumaynī's eulogy in Yādnama-yi Ustād-i Shahīd Murtadha Muhahhari, pp. 3-5

Some Mutahari,s books in english

1. Understanding the Uniqueness of the Qur'an
2. Glimpses of Nahj al-Balaghah
3. Introduction to 'Irfan
4. 'Ashura: Misrepresentations and Distortions
5. History and Human Evolution : Part I , Part II
6. The Role of Reason in Ijtihad
7. The Role of Ijtihad in Legislation
8. Introduction to 'Ilm al-Kalam
- 9 .Western Nationalism and Islamic Nationhood
10. The Causes Responsible for Materialist tendencies in the West :
Part I , Part II , Part III , Part IV

Ayatollah Morteza Motahari, born 1920, received his elementary education in theology from his father, Sheikh Mohammad Hossein in his home town, Fariman in Khorasan province. When he was twelve years of age joined the Islamic Educational Center at Mashhad and pursued his studies there for five years. Then he proceeded to Qom, the great center of Islamic education. He stayed there for fifteen years and completed his education in Islamic Beliefs and Jurisprudence under the

supervision of the renowned philosopher Allameh Mohammad Hossein Tabatabai, Ayatollah Khomeini and many other distinguished scholars. Then he migrated to Tehran.

During the period of his education the Motahari felt that the communists wanted to change the sacred religion of Islam and destroy its spirit by mixing their atheistic views with the Islamic philosophy and interpreting the verses of the Qur'an in a materialistic manner. Communism was not the only thing which received his attention. He also wrote on exegesis of the Qur'an, philosophy, ethics, sociology, history and many other subjects. In all his writings the real object he had in view was to give replies to the objections raised by others against Islam, to prove the shortcomings of other schools of thought and to manifest the greatness of Islam. He believed that in order to prove the falsity of Marxism and other ideologies like it, it was necessary not only to comment on them in a scholarly manner but also to present the real image of Islam.

Ayatollah Motahari wrote assiduously and continuously from his student days right up to 1979, the year of his assassination. He was one of the most versatile Islamic scholars and prolific writers of recent times, deeply rooted in traditional learning and enamoured of its exponents. He was a Islamic thinker who had fully absorbed a rigorous philosophical training. Much of his work has been published in and outside Iran.

The activities of the Ayatollah Motahari were intolerable for the followers of some other Islamic faction, Forqan, and they, therefore, decided to remove him from the scene. Eventually they succeeded on the 1st of May 1979. When the sad news was conveyed to Ayatollah Khomeini he, in his condolence message, said: "I have been deprived of a dear son of mine. I am lamenting upon the death of one who was the fruit of my life."

Ayatollah Motahary was a popular figure in the religious circles of Iran. He served in the Tehran University as the Head of the Department of Theology and Islamic Learning's. At the time of his assassination he was the president of the Constitutional Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a member of the Revolutionary Council.

Chapter 12

Allamah Sayyid Murtadha Askari - (1901-2007)

Passed away in Tehran on Monday 17th Sept 2007 - 7th Mahe Mubarak Ramadhan 1428.

The Late Allamah Al-Askari was an illustrious scholar who authored several books and was also one of the founders of the Islamic Movement in Iraq. An eminent Historian, traditionalist, and one of the Seminary's learned masters who was expert in so many researches and had compiled many books on Imamate, Wilaayat, Reasoning and Traditional Researches.

Allamah Askari was born in Samarra on 18 Jumada al- Thaani in 1332 (1901). He began his primary school in Samarra (Iraq), and then he joined the seminary of that city. When he was 28 years old, he migrated to the holy city of Qom and began his study in Usool and Fiqh, and benefited from the lectures of Ayatullah Mar`ashi Najafi and Ayatullah Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Shari`atmadari Sauooji. He also benefited from the late Ayatullah Uzma Imam Khomayni, Ayatullah Mirza Khalil Kamra'I, Ayatullah Haj Shaykh Mahdi Shaheed (Payeen Shahri) in the fields of theology and beliefs, tafseer, ethics, and purification of the carnal soul.

Following his studies, Ayatullah Askari began to research in the field of biography, history, and itinerary. The result of these studies, especially having studied the writings of Ayatullah Mirza Shirazi regarding the issue of tobacco, was that he **became acquainted with the beginnings of the cultural assault of the Western colonial forces against Islamic world.**

Ayatullah Askari might be the first Islamic thinker who recognized the reality of educational methods applied for the education centers in the Eastern countries, by the European counselors of that time. He

made many significant researches in this field from which he got the reasons behind the Eastern countries' backwardness. He challenged the methods of education of that era with his studies.

2

Ayatullah Askari began his trips and journeys to many Islamic countries, and met many eminent personalities like Ahmad Ameen (the author of the book titled: Completion in Islam). In 1363 A.H., both personalities decided to establish a special school in which the children were taught genuine teachings of Islam.

One of the students of that school was Ayatullah Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr. When the project of Ayatullah Askari gave good results in its first stage, he decided to begin the second stage. For this, he needed the permission of establishing a special place wherein Islamic sciences are taught. This step preceded the establishing of a university for teaching the principles of religion.

He divided his researching program into many parts. These parts consisted of the earlier stages of creation, the formation of religious mission based on the main core (i.e. the Islamic mission), and the Islamic historical eras to the end of the Abbasid dynasty.

The result of these studies was that Ayatullah Askari was able to achieve information and analysis which no one before him was able to achieve in that form. This achievement was represented by reaching a convincing proof regarding the unreality of the traditions collected by Sayf Ibn Omar al-Tamimi and other personalities. His research presented to the world the forgery regarding:

- (1) Abdullah Ibn Saba', and
- (2) 150 (So called) Companions

This proof shocked the researchers and the public alike, and made them check again the subjects they inherited through centuries, and therefore, many Schools of Thought which were built by Tabari and many eminent historians were destroyed. Ayatullah Askari proved that these matters, which many thought were indisputable facts and events, had no proof of their being real.

The first book of Ayatullah Askari in this field, titled "Abdullah Ibn Saba'" and the second book "With Dr al-Wardi" were published in 1954.

Ayatullah Askari continued his significant activities in various fields, especially in the social affairs, even after his return to Iran. Beside that, he established many schools and clinics.

**Ayatullah Sayyid Murtadha Askari passed away in
Tehran on Monday 17th Sept 2007 – 7th Mahe Mubarake Ramadhan
1428. May Allah swt rest his soul in peace.**

www.ziaraat.com
Sabeel-e-Sakina

Chapter 13

Shaheed Beheshti - (1928-1981)

<http://www.dartabligh.org/biographies/ShahidBeheshti.html>

Remember those who demonstrated us the true path of Sayyadus Shohada .."YOU ARE A NATION(Ummah) FOR OUR NATION"... . Imam Khoemini for Shahid Beheshti

Shahid (the martyr) Sayyed Mohammad Hosseiny Beheshti was born in Aban 2nd, 1307 (October 24th, 1928) in a district called Lomban in Isfahan (Chaharsouq district).

He was born in a family whose members were familiar with Islamic values. His father was one of Isfahan's clergies and prayer-leader of Lomban mosque who went to the village once a week in order to preach and solve the problems of people and establish the community prayers. He passed away in 1341 (1962). His maternal grand father the late Haj Mir Mohammad Sadiq Modarres Khatunabadi, was one of the leading authorities on divine law.

When Shahid (Martyr) Beheshti was just one year old, he passed away and Shahid Beheshti was deprived of his meeting, however; knowing about his grandfather's manner later on affected Shahid Beheshti's personality.

With four years of age he entered traditional elementary school. He was so genius that he learned how to recite Quran and how to read and write in a very short time.

After a while, having passed the entrance exam, he entered the primary school at the sixth grade but since he was not old enough to take part in that grade he was registered in fourth grade. Nevertheless he took part in the final exams and was granted the second best student title. Wishing to complete his studied, he entered the high school.

In 1321 (1942) he gave it up, since he was interested in the theological matters he entered the theological center. Although his home was in Isfahan for saving time, being independent while thinking and studying, since 1324(1945) he rented a room at Sad r school of Isfahan and he lived there.

During 1321 to 1325(1942- 1946) he could study the Arabic literature, logic, Fiqh (Jurisprudence), divine law & fundamentals and stole the attention of his professors to the extent that when they met him as if he reminded his maternal grand father

In 1325 (1946) when he was 18 years old, he left for Qom to continue his studies and in 6month-time he studied the rest of subjects namely : Sath , Kefayeh and Makasib. In the same year, Allameh Tabatabaee came to Qom and his classes and sessions attracte d the active students like Shahid Beheshti who later on took part in his classes.

In 1326 (1947) Dr. Beheshti with Shahid Motahari, and some of his friends prepared a schedule according to which they had to go to the most remote villages to preach Islamic values, by means of a little amount of expense which Ayatollah Boroujerdi gave t o them to guide the villagers and inform each other about their ideas concerning planning for future activities.

In 1327 (1948) he continued the normal high school education and he could get his literal diploma in final exams of late comers. Then he entered the college of Theology (at that time rational sciences)and in 1330(1951) he received his BA. During (1329-13 30)(1950-1951) he was in Tehran and at the end of mentioned year he returned to Qom again and this time he officially started his teaching at Hakim Nezami high school as an English teacher. During (1329-1330)(1951-1956) he spent his life carrying out res earches and philosophical matters .

In Ordibehesht 1331 (May 1952) he married one of his relatives whose result was 4 children (2 sons and 2 daughters).

In 1333 (1956-1959) he was a student of Ph.D. of theological philosophy (and of course in 1353(1947) he defended his thesis called _the problems of Mabad ul Tabi_e in Quran_, under guidance of the Shahid Professor Mortza Motahari. During this time he was coming and going to Tehran and Qom.

In 1338 (1959) he founded an English class at _Din and Danesh School_ for theological students and in the same year along with the thought of the leading figures like Motahari, Taleqani_etc, he held the monthly

speech sessions in Tehran on which the programmed lectures were held with the large number of the students and intellectuals as an audience. From 1339 (1960) the idea of organizing the theological center and arranging the syllabus of it for 17 years was in his mind whose result was foundation of _Haqqani_ and _Montazeriyeh_ schools. In 1341 (1962) he decided to establish the Islamic center of students and educators which was a measure for linking between the educated people in the past and present methods.

He was actively taking part in (1341-1342)(1962-1963) campaigns. And in collecting and composing the _statements_ he was a great help. From 1342 he formed a searching group for surveying about the Islamic government and in the same year Savak (the controlling system for security at that time) made him leave Qom.

He came to Tehran and in programming on preparing the textbooks was closely cooperating with Shahid (martyr) Bahonar, in the same year he was also cooperating with campaigning groups and coalition bodies. Besides, he was participating in a 4-member council in the name of _divine law-political council_ with help of Shaid (martyr) Motahari, Mr. Anvari and Mr. Molaee.

In 1343 (1963) with the proposal of Ayatollah Haeri and Ayatollah Milani he left for Hamburg and he began to manage and direct the mosque and formation of religious groups of the young and revealing Shah's (the last king) crimes.

At this time he traveled to Saudi Arabia (in Haj. time) Syria, Lebanon, Turkey to visit Imam Mousa Sadr and in 1348 he traveled to Iraq to visit Imam Khomeini.

In 1349 (1970) he returned to Iran and it was impossible for him to return to Germany. He started to teach in session for interpreting Quran and examined the textbooks and this process continued till 1355(1976).

In 1359 (1971) he formed 50 sessions of interpreting of Quran on Saturdays which was called _the School of Quran_ where was a place for gathering the active young people. In 1354 (1975) due to the mentioned sessions and the relationships with the campaigning organizations inside and out side of Iran he was arrested by Savak and after a time he was released.

From 1355 (1976) and later he began to deal with formational tasks and in (1356)(1977) he was determined to form the broad formations being active in secret activities and also overtones for forming a party. In the same year due to the disagreements among the Islamic active groups in abroad (which there have been some conflicts) he traveled there and

even to the United States and he paved the ground for establishing new relationships among the Islamic groups.

In 1357 (1978) he was arrested for a couple of days and he was freed. After which he went to Imam Khomeini in Paris. After his return he played an effective role regarding determining the policy of the Islamic revolution.

From Azar 1357 (December 1978) according to Imam's command he formed the revolution's council and he was dealing with that till the victory of the revolution.

After the revolution as an intellectual person in the revolution's council he wanted to organize and arrange the affairs. Regarding this mentioned fact he founded the Islamic Republic Party. He took part in the election of Experts Assembly, and as a vice president of Majlis he dealt with managing the affairs, preparing and forming the Constitution. After resigning of the interim government in 1358 (1979) he was doing his duty as a minister of justice. Then through the command of Imam he was chosen and appointed as the chairman of Supreme Court.

He was busy with his duties till the evening of Tir, 7, 1360 (June 28, 1981) after Namaz Maqrib (evening prayer) and Esha (night prayer) while giving lecture, he was martyred due to the explosion of a bomb planted by the members of MKO terrorist group, known as Monafeqin with 72 people from his colleagues and through the tears and sighs and sorrows of millions of Iranian people he was buried in Behesht-e Zahra Tomb.

May his soul rest in peace.

Chapter 14

Allama Sayed Safdar Hussain Najafi - (1933 AD)

BIRTH & FAMILY BACKGROUND

Allama Sayed Safdar Hussain Najafi was born in 1933 AD at Alipur in Muzaffargadh District. The area is famous for its fertility and lush green environs. He is from a well known Naqvi Sayed family. He descended from Sayed Jalal al Din Surqosh Bukhari who was from a branch of the scions of Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.). Safdar Hussain's father was Sayed Ghulam Sarvar Naqvi who was a person of great piety and nobility.

At the time of his birth, his parents chose to name him Safdar Hussain. It is a pleasant coincidence that the very same day his uncle, Ustad al Ulema Sayed Mohammed Yar Naqvi, was declared passed in his matriculation examination. Those days it was deemed a very important and high qualification! The family therefore reveled in the two happy events! Very soon Ustad al Ulema proceeded to Najaf e Ashraf and returned from there in 1940. Sayed Safdar Hussain was seven years of age at that time and was ready to commence his studies.

INITIAL EDUCATION

His father's wish was to groom him to become an erudite scholar in Islamic Shariah. Therefore he was totally committed to the tutelage of Ustad al Ulema. At that time the Ustad was teaching at the Madrasa of Ustad Sayed Mohammed Baqir Naqavi located at the village Chak 38. This is the same place where resides the well-known Zakir (sermonizer), Sayed Khadim Hussain Shah. Sayed Safdar Hussain spent about 6 months at the Madrasa and then proceeded with his mentor to Multan to pursue his studies at Madrasa Bab al Ilm there. After spending 2 months they moved to Madrasa Thut Sial in the environs of Muzaffargadh. There too he didn't stay for more than 6 months. In 1941 the uncle and nephew moved to Jalalpur

langiana where he pursued his studies for 4 years. He was at the **Madrasa in Sitpur, Muzzafargadh District**, for six months. In 1946 he went once again to **Madrasa Bab al Ilm, Multan**, and studied under **Maulana Sayed Zain al Abedin** and **Maulana Sheik Mohammed Yar**. Till that time he had completed the study of **Mubadiyat**.

Sayed Safdar Hussain has recounted an incident that took place during his second stint at **Multan**. The urge for acquiring knowledge took him to a **Sunni Madrasa** where a well known scholar used to give lessons. When **Sayed Safdar** entered the class a lesson on the events of **Karbala** was in progress. The teacher (who took pride in calling himself a Sayed!) said that it was a battle between two princes of whom one was victorious and the other got vanquished! After that day, **Sayed Safdar Hussain** didn't ever enter the portals of that school where the accursed **Yazid** was equated with **Imam Hussain (a.s)**! In 1947 **Sayed Safdar** went to **Madrasa Sadiqya Khanpur, District Rahimyar Khan** and studied under **Maulana Hussain Baksh** who is known for his commentary of the **Holy Quran**. In 1948 he proceeded to **Khangadh** and studied **Shara Jami Qutbi** and **Shara Bab Hadi Ashr** under **Maulana Ahmed Hussain Qibla**. In 1949 **Maulana Hussain Baksh** went to his ancestral village and started giving lessons there. **Safdar Hussain** too went to the village **Jada** and completed the study of **Dars e Nizami** under him.

DURING HIS STUDENT DAYS

Two notable events took place during his student days. At one point he felt very home-sick and returned to the ancestral village saying that he wasn't able to pursue the studies any further. He told his parents that he desired to do farming in the village. His father very firmly persuaded him to return back to his studies. This young truant turned out to be an eminent religious scholar in his later years!

The other event is that at one point he felt that there was nothing for him in his ancestral country and he must go to **Najaf e Ashraf** and pursue his studies in the precincts of the **Mausoleum of Hazrat Amir al Momineen (a.s)**. He had neither money nor the means for travel. He made his plan with another young lad. They started walking on the railway track towards **Quetta** thinking that they would walk to **Iran** and then to **Iraq**. They walked about 125 miles and reached **Checha Railway Station**. There a good Samaritan took pity on them and arranged for their return home! The person told them that they must wait patiently when **Maula** would himself call them to **Najaf e Ashraf**!

PROCEEDS TO NAJAF E ASHRAF

In the last quarter of 1951 Allama Najafi got a call from **Hazrat Amir al Momineen (a.s)**. On 17 October 1951 he started his journey for **Najaf e Ashraf**. It is the practice of all the international centres of learning that they don't accept the degrees awarded by **Pakistani** universities and expect the students to qualify in the entrance tests conducted by them for the same curriculum. When they satisfy themselves that the student has the required proficiency to pursue the higher studies, they give admittance to the candidate. Allama Najafi too took up the study of **Kifaya Rasael** and **Makasib** for 4 years in **Najaf e Ashraf** and then took **Dars e kharij** for one year. **Dars e Kharij** is equivalent to a doctorate in a university. His mentors in **Najaf** were **Al Sayed Mohsin al Hakim**, **Ayatollah Abul Qasim Khoei**, **Allama Sheik Mohammed Ali Afghani**, **Allama Sayed Abul Qasim Rashti**, **Aqai Buzurg Tehrani** (who gave him the certification for study of the Hadith), **Sheik Mohammed Taqi Al e Razi** and **Sheik al Jameah Maulana Akhtar Abbas**.

While **Allama Sayed Safdar Hussain** faced much hardship during his journey to **Najaf e Ashraf**, his stay there too wasn't one of ease. He couldn't get admittance to any of the hostels there. He used to spend his nights on the pavements. However he had the privilege of acquiring knowledge in the disciplines of the **Ale Mohammed (s.a)** in ample measure. At the beginning of the fourth year of his stay at **Najaf e Ashraf** he married into a respectable family of **Najaf**. The next two years he had a life of considerable ease. After spending 5 years in the **Holy City Allama Sayed Safdar Hussain** decided to return home to **Pakistan**. In the year 1956 he arrived in his home country and served his community the rest of his life there. His scholastic and oratorical services have been highly commendable. He was instrumental in establishing many **Madrasas** where large numbers of students acquire learning.

HIS DISCIPLES

As a fruit tree is recognized with the quality of fruits it puts forth, so is a mentor recognized by the quality of the disciples he trains. The culture of mentor-disciple in **Islam** is time tested! The disciples of **Allama Najafi** are there in every nook and corner of the country. They are there in other lands as well!

We are mentioning here only those disciples of the **Allama** who are recognized as scholars of high caliber:

Allama Hafiz Riyaz Hussain Najafi, He succeeded Allama Safdar Hussain as the principal of Hauza e Ilmia Jameh al Muntazar, Maulana Sheik Mohsin Ali Najafi Principal Madrasa Jameh Ahl al Bayt, Islamabad, Maulana Sayed Ashiq Hussain Najafi Principal Jameh al Ghadeer, Maulana Sheik Karamat Ali Principal Jameh Jafaria, Maulana Sheik Hassan Reza Ghadeeri Principal Jameh Muntazar London, Maulana Moosa Baig Najafi mentor Jameh al Muntazar, Maulana Baqir, Maulana Taj ud deen Haidari, Maulana Mohammed Aslam Sadiqi, Maulana Manzoor Hussain Abidi, Maulana Sayed Mohammed Hussain Akbar Principal Minhaj al Quran, Maulana Sayed Mohammed Abbas, Maulana Sayed Khadim Hussain Naqvi, Maulana Abul Hassan Naqvi, Maulana Sayed Mohammed Sibtain Naqvi.

LITERARY WORKS

Maulana Najafi was endowed with a short life by the **Almighty**. But he lived a full life of learning and erudition in that short period. Despite his multifarious activities he has left behind more than 70 books and chronicles. Most of them have been translations of the works of masters. But the columns and comments he penned on the contents have added quality to his efforts. The books that he translated, adding his learned comments, are:

Tafseer e Namoonah: The original work is in **Persian** compiled by a board consisting of erudite scholars under **Aqai Nasir Makarim**. This commentary is so comprehensive that one wouldn't need to refer to any other commentary. This work had been done under the instructions of **Imam Khomeini**. **Allama Najafi** translated the book into simple **Urdu** that runs into 27 hard bound volumes. He accomplished the monumental work in a period of 6 years.

Kitab al Saqifa: This book, in fact, was translated by someone else, but **Allama Najafi** reviewed and edited it. This book throws light on the politics of the infamous **Saqifa**.

Tazkirat al Khawaas: The original book was written by **Sibt ibn e Jauzi**, an eminent **Sunni** scholar. The book is based on the **Sirat al Aimma—the lives of the Imams (a.s)**.

Tauzeeh al Masail: This is the **Urdu** translation of **Imam Khomeini's "Tauzeeh al Masail"**.

Hukumat e Islami: This is an **Urdu** translation of the talks given by **Imam Khomeini** on the subject of governance under **Islamic**

Norms. The theme of these talks, delivered in Najaf e Ashraf, Iraq, was **Wilayat e Faqeeh**.

Tafseer e Mauzooee: This is an Urdu translation of the commentary of the Holy Quran done by Aqae Jafar Subhani. This is a commentary dealing with the topics (Mauzooaat) in the Holy Quran separately. This was one of the last significant works of Allama Najafi.

Ahsan al Miqaal: This is a translation of Sheik Qummi's "Muntahi al Damaal" which highlights the lives and works of the Infallibles (a.s).

Inteqaab Tarikh Tabari: This is an Urdu translation of the chapters dealing with the lives and times of the First Three Imams (a.s) from the monumental book of history written by Allama ibn e Jarir Tabari.

Serat e Aimma: Allama Najafi translated 12 small booklets on the lives of the Infallible Imams (a.s).

Huqooq aur Islam: This is the first book authored by Allama Najafi. It encompasses a Muslim's daily rights and duties.

The other works credited to Allama Najafi are: Irfan al Majalis, Saada al Abadia, Maadan al Jawahir, Irshad Inqilab, Aqaed Imamia, Barah Imami Shia and Ahl al Bayt (a.s), Aitraaf Haqiqat Irshad al Quoob, Risala al Mawaiz etc.

THE DIFFICULT TIMES

When the Iranian Revolution succeeded, everyone seemed to be eulogizing it. Whoever had any animosity against any other person he would blame him of being an antagonist of the Revolution. People had started spreading such canard against some eminent Ulema. They started printing and distributing pamphlets against such Ulema and even they mailed copies to their subjects of the insinuation. Allama Najafi experienced all this and his heart cried.

Sometimes they spread the falsehood that the Allama was against the Kalima e Wilaya. This despite the fact that Allama Najafi was the member of the team that represented to the High Court that the Kalima e wilaya—Ali an Wali Allah—is an important pillar of the Shia Creed and it was officially endorsed in Rahnuma e Asataza, an important guide book issued by the Government to the teachers. The Allama's antagonists also ridiculed him in the presence of his own next of kin. His son is on record saying that if the words were repeated in front of a Court the persons would be given sixty flogs in punishment. They recited lampooning verses against the Allama in the gatherings of the community. Notwithstanding all these attacks, Allama Safdar

Hussain's only reaction was patience and equanimity. He proved a true practitioner of **Kazimain al Ghaiz—Patience in anger!**

The **Allama's** friends received the sad message of his demise. He was now free of the worldly trials and tribulations. His life was like a diamond that has many facets. In every facet of this diamond we have lessons to learn. He was an exemplary brother, a son-in-law and a spouse. His spouse's assessment of him is weightier than a thousand praises. She said, "I am not proud of my husband's achievement, I am only thankful to Allah!" He was an affectionate father and a considerate mentor. In his 33 years of teaching he never once reprimanded a disciple. The only time he used his rod to beat his disciple **Sayed Ata al Rehman Naqvi**. The disciple cried. **The Allama's** mother asked him to refrain from using the rod! From that day he was very soft and considerate with his disciples. When his disciples visited him to pay their last homage to him he said, "My sons! If I had ever been unreasonable to you; please do forgive me!" The disciples cried inconsolably over this. **The Allama** was also a very effective reformer. He not only pointed out the social ills in his talks, but he advised the steps to overcome them. Although he wasn't financially independent, he always strived to help the needy. He was less a **Maulvi** and more a **Dervish**. His food, dress and living style reflected the life of a mendicant. He never took home the **Khums** fund. Once a person gifted to him a drugget and two shawls and said that they were from his **Khums** money. He immediately gave hundred rupees to the person. The person took fifty rupees from that being the cost of the gifted articles and returned the remaining fifty rupees to **Allama**.

Chapter 15

Ayatullah al-Uzma al-Hajj as-Shaykh Muhammad Fadil al-Lankarani - (1931-2007)

1. His Birth

AYATULLAH AL-UZMA AL-HAJ ASH-SHAYKH FADIL LANKARANI was born in 1931 in the Holy city of Qum. His father, the late Ayatullah Fadil Lankarani was a great teacher and scholar in the Islamic Seminary of Qum. His dear mother, was a pure and noble woman of descent from the family of the Prophet of Islam, Peace be upon him and his family.

2. His Studies

At the age of 13, after the completion of primary school, he began studying Islamic studies in the seminary of Qum, where due to his great ability and aptitude, he was able to finish the preliminary stages of Islamic studies within six years.

At the age of 19, he started attending lessons in Fiqh (Jurisprudence) and Usul (Principles of Jurisprudence) at the Kharij level (the highest level of Islamic studies), which were being taught by Ayatullah al-Uzma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Burujerdi, May Allah raise his status. Because of his young age and his ability to pick up information very quickly, his fellow students and his teachers quickly recognized him. One of his close friends and study partners, during his quest for knowledge, was none other than the beloved son of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the late Shaheed Mustafa Khomeini, May he be showered in Allah's peace.

3. His Teachers

Ayatullah Lankarani benefited from Ayatullah al-Uzma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Burujerdi's lectures in the subjects of Fiqh and Usul for almost 11 years. He also participated in the classes of the

late Ayatullah al-Uzma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Ruhullah al-Musawi al-Khumayni for 9 years. Under these two great teachers, he was able to benefit a great deal, and quickly excelled in his studies.

He also took part in the lectures on philosophy and Tafsir (Explanation) of the Holy Qur'an under the great scholar, 'Allamah as-Sayyid Muhammad Hussayn al-Tabataba'i, May Allah raise his rank, in which he gained much knowledge and enlightenment.

Because of her perseverance and endeavors, he was able to reach to the great stage of Ijithad at the early age of 25, something that his eminent teacher, the late Ayatullah al-Uzma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Burujerdi gave to him in writing.

4. His Teaching

For many years, he was busy teaching the intermediate level of studies in the Islamic Seminary of Qum to a great number of students. In addition to this, for the past 25 years, he has been teaching lessons of Kharij in the areas of Fiqh and Usul (Kharij is the highest level of Islamic studies after which, if completed in their entirety, elevate the person to a Mujtahid). His lessons are so popular that in any one lesson, over 700 scholars and personalities of the Hawza 'Ilmiyyah of Qum can be seen taking part! In addition to this, for the past few years, his lessons on Fiqh have been broadcast by Iranian Radio, thus, those living within the Islamic Republic, and even those in foreign countries have benefited from his vast amount of knowledge.

5. His Struggles against the Despotic Regime of the Shah

From the beginning of the political and social struggle and defiance of Ayatullah Khomeini against the oppression, corruption and tyrannical government of the Pahlavi dynasty in Iran, Ayatullah Fadil Lankarani was one of the helpers and supporters of Ayatullah Khomeini. Step by step in every movement that the defenders of Islam took, Ayatullah Lankarani was there and played an active role. One of his important moves was to be involved with the Jami'ah Mudarasin, a group that consists of the teachers in the Hawza 'Ilmiyyah of Qum in which they were busy spreading the word of Islam and the Islamic Revolution among the masses. More than this, it was they who announced the Marja'iyat and Leadership of Ayatullah Khomeini... Many times during this difficult period, Ayatullah Fadil Lankarani was jailed, and finally, as if the Shah

could no longer take the 'Ulama and their standing up for the truth, he was forced to exile him to an area known as Bandar Lange. After staying there for 4 months, we was moved to the city of Yazd, where he was forced to reside for a period of 18 months.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Ayatullah Fadil Lankarani continued to play an important role along side the leader, Ayatullah Khomeini, May his spirit be sanctified, and even today, under the leadership of Ayatullah Khameni'i, he is still fully supportive and active.

After the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Ayatullah Lankarani was appointed as a member of The Council of Experts, and for more than 10 years, served as the administrator of the Islamic Seminary of Qum.

6. His Love for the Ahl al-Bait, Peace be upon all of them

From the earliest of times, himself and his family have been lovers and followers of the Ahl al-Bait, Peace be upon all of them, and as has been noted, weekly gatherings to commemorate the martyrdom of Abu 'Abdillah al-Husayn, Peace be upon him, and his loyal family and followers, gatherings to commemorate the martyrdom of the Ma'sumin, Peace be upon all of them, and programs to celebrate the birth anniversaries of the Leaders of Islam, Peace be upon all of them, were held by his late father, and even today, continue to be held.

7. Salat al-Jama'at in Qum

After the passing away of Ayatullah al-Uzma al-Sayyid Shahab ad-Din Najafi al-Mar'ashi, he was inundated with requests from the students of the Hawza 'Ilmiyyah of Qum, as well as from the people of Qum, not to mention from those in charge to oversee and run the daily programs of the Haram of Fatimah al-Ma'sumah, Peace be upon her, to lead the Salat al-Jama'at. He humbly accepted this responsibility, and every night, under the graceful eyes of the sister of Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Rida who is buried in Qum, thousands of scholars, students, visitors to this holy city and residents of Qum offered their prayers behind this humble man.

8. The Station f Marja'iyat

After the death of Ayatullah al-Uzma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Ruhullah al-Musawi al-Khumayni, May Allah raise his rank, the believers turned to him for Taqlid. After the untimely demise of Ayatullah al-Uzma ash-

Shaykh Araki, May Allah raise his rank, Ayatullah Fadil Lankarani was officially introduced, by the Hawza 'Ilmiyyah of Qum in their statement, as the number one Marja Taqlid of the Muslim Ummah.

9. His Writings

Along with the important task of teaching the future scholars of Islam, and raising up the guardians of the Religion, he also finds time to write and compile books, some of which include:

1. *Tafsil al-Shari'ah (Arabic)*: A concise, explanatory work detailing the book Tahrir al-Wasilah, which was Ayatullah Khomeini's compilation of Islamic rules and regulations written in Arabic. Up to now, 13 volumes of this work have been printed and are available, with another 5 volumes under print.

2. *Hashiah al-'Urwatul Wuthqa (Arabic)*: The detailed book of Fiqh written by Ayatullah Sayyid Kazim Yazdi, with the opinions of Ayatullah Fadil Lankarani.

3. *Nihaya al-Taqrir (Arabic)*: The notes of the lessons of Ayatullah al-Uzma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Burujerdi's classes on Salat, printed in two volumes.

4. *Hashiah Kitab at-Taharah Misbah al-Faqihi (Arabic)*: The notes on the "Book of Cleanliness" written by Muhaqqiq Hamdani.

5. A summary on the topic of "al-Ijtihad and at-Taqlid" from the book al-'Urwatul Wuthqa in Arabic.

6. *Kitab as-Sawm (Arabic)*: The Book of Fasting

7. *Kitab al-Qada (Arabic)*: The Book of Passing Judgement

8. *Al-Masail al-Mustahdithah (Arabic)*: A compilation of the Islamic laws.

9. A discussion on the ruling of reading the Salat while wearing clothing that one has doubts about. (Arabic)

10. A discussion on the Hajj and 'Umrah.(Arabic)

11. *Al-Ahkam al-Wadihah (Arabic)*: Compilation of the Islamic rules.
12. *Ahkam al-Hajj (Arabic)*: Notes on the book Tahrir al-Wasilah on the section of Hajj.
13. *Al-Qawwa'id al-Fiqhhiyah (Arabic)*: A text covering the various laws of Islamic Jurisprudence.
14. *Taqrirat al-Usul (Arabic)*: His notes on the lessons of Ayatullah Khomeini, printed in 5 volumes.
15. *Tibyan al-Usul (Arabic)*: His notes on the lessons of Usul that he has taught, printed in four volumes.
16. *Taqrirat al-Usul (Arabic)*: His notes on the lessons of Usul that were taught by Araki Burujerdi.
17. *Taqrirat Dars-e-Kharij Usul (Farsi)*: His Notes on the lessons of Usul that he has taught, printed in 8 volumes.
18. *Tawdhi al-Masail (Farsi)*: Complete collection of Islamic laws.
19. *Manasik Hajj (Farsi)*: Rules for the Hajj.
20. *An Introduction to Tafsir in the Science of the Qur'an (Arabic)*
21. *Tafsir of Surah al-Fatiah (Arabic)*
22. Possessing a country in the view point of Imam 'Ali, Peace be upon him.
23. *The Infallibility of the Prophets*
24. *A Collection of Indexes*: An index to Bihar al-Anwar, al-Ghadir and al-Mizan.
25. *Ahl al-Bait, Peace be upon them: The 14 lights in the Ayah of Tathir (33:33)*

26. *The Pure A'immah, Peace be upon all of them: The Guardians of the Revelation in the Holy Qur'an.* (These two books (Ahl al-Bait, Peace be upon them: The 14 lights in the Ayah of Tathir (33:33) and this one)) were compiled and written along with Ayatullah Ashraqi.

27. *Manasik Hajj (Arabic)*

28. Questions and Answers regarding the Hajj (Arabic)

29. Questions and Answers regarding the Hajj (Farsi)

30. *Jami' al-Masa'il (Farsi):* Two volumes of Questions and Answers dealing with various Islamic topics.

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Chapter 16

Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr - (1933-1980)

Born : On : March 1 1935
Died : On : 8 April 1980
Age :47

At : Kazmayn Iraq
At : Najaf Iraq

Biography

His father died in 1937, leaving the family penniless. In 1945 the family moved to the holy city of Najaf, where al-Sadr would spend the rest of his life. He was a child prodigy who, at ten, was delivering lectures on Islamic history, and at eleven, he studied logic and wrote a book to refute philosophy.[1] Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr completed his religious teachings at religious seminaries under al-Khoei and Muhsin al-Hakim at the age of 25 and began teaching.

While teaching he became a prominent member of the Iraqi Shia community, and was noted for his many writings. His first works were detailed critiques of Marxism that presented early ideas of an alternative Islamic form of government. Perhaps his most important work was *Iqtisaduna*, one of the most important works on Islamic economics. This work was a critique of both socialism and capitalism. He was subsequently commissioned by the government of Kuwait to assess how that country's oil wealth could be managed in keeping with Islamic principles. This led to a major work on Islamic banking that still forms the basis for modern Islamic banks. 16. *Al-Bank al-la Ribawi fi al-Islam* (Usury-free Banking in Islam).

He also worked with Sayyid Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim in forming an Islamist movement in Iraq. This attracted the attention of the Baath Party, which resulted in numerous imprisonments for the Ayatollah. He was often subjugated to torture during his imprisonments, but continued his work after being released. One of the founders of modern Islamist thought he is credited with first developing the notion, later put in operation in Iran, of having western style democratic elections, but with a

body of Muslim scholars to ensure all laws corresponded with Islamic teachings.

In 1977, he was sentenced to life in prison following uprisings in Najaf, but was released two years later due to his immense popularity. Upon his release however, he was put under house arrest. In 1980, after writing in the defense of the Islamic Revolution, Sadr was once again imprisoned, tortured, and executed by the regime of Saddam Hussein. His sister, Amina Sadr bint al-Huda, was also imprisoned, tortured, and executed. It has been alleged that Sadr was killed by having an iron nail hammered into his head[2] and then being set on fire.

During the execution of Saddam Hussein, chants of "Long live Mohammed Baqir Sadr!" were heard being chanted by some of the Shi'a guards. CNN article

Political Philosophy: Wilayat Al-Umma

Mohammad Baqir Al-Sadr's political philosophy, known as Wilayat Al-Umma (Governance of the people), set out his view of a modern day Islamic state. Using his mastery of the Quran and his innovative subject-based approach to Quranic exegesis, Al-Sadr extracted two concepts from the Holy text in relation to governance: *khilafat al-insan* (Man as heir or trustee of God) and *shahadat al-anbiya* (Prophets as witnesses). Al-Sadr explained that throughout history there have been '...two lines. Man's line and the Prophet's line. The former is the *khalifa* (trustee) who inherits the earth from God; the latter is the *shahid* (witness)'. [3].

Al-Sadr demonstrated that *khilafa* (governance) is 'a right given to the whole of humanity' and explained it to be an obligation given from God to the human race to 'tend the globe and administer human affairs'. This was a major advancement of Islamic political theory. Al-Sadr stated that the legitimacy of a government in an Islamic state comes from the people, and not from the clerics. Al-Sadr explained that throughout history there have been '...two lines. Man's line and the Prophet's line. The former is the *khalifa* (trustee) who inherits the earth from God; the latter is the *shahid* (witness)'. [3].

While Al-Sadr identified *khilafa* as the obligation and right of the people, he used a broad-based exegesis of a Quranic verse[4] to identify who held the responsibility of *shahada* in an Islamic state: First, the Prophets (*anbiya'*); second, the Imams, who are considered a divine (*rabbani*) continuation of the Prophets in this line; and lastly the *marja'iyya* (see Marja)[5].

While the two functions of *khilafa* (governance) and *shahada* (martyrism; supervision) were united during the times of the Prophets, the two diverged during the occultation so that *khilafa* returned to the people (*umma*) and *shahada* to the scholars[6].

Al-Sadr also presented a practical application of *khilafa*, in the absence of the twelfth Imam. He argued the practical application of the *khilafa* (governance) required the establishment of a democratic system whereby the people regularly elect their representatives in government:

'Islamic theory rejects monarchy as well as the various forms of dictatorial government; it also rejects the aristocratic regimes and proposes a form of government, which contains all the positive aspects of the democratic system.' [7]

He continued to champion this point until his final days:

'Lastly, I demand, in the name of all of you and in the name of the values you uphold, to allow the people the opportunity truly to exercise their right in running the affairs of the country by holding elections in which a council representing the ummah (people) could truly emerge.'[8]

Al-Sadr was executed by Saddam Hussein in 1980 before he was able to provide any details of the mechanism for the practical application of the *shahada*(martyrism) concept in an Islamic state. A few elaborations of *shahada* can be found in Al-Sadr's works.

In his text 'Role of the Shiah Imams in the reconstruction of Islamic society', Al-Sadr illustrates the scope and limitations of *shahada* by using the example of the third Shi'i Imam, Hussein ibn Ali (the grandson of the Prophet), who stood up to Yazid, the ruler at the time. Al-Sadr explains Yazid was not simply going against Islamic teachings, as many rulers before and after him had done, but he was distorting the teachings and traditions of Islam and presenting his deviated ideas as Islam itself. This, therefore, is what led Imam Hussein to intervene to challenge Yazid in order to restore the true teachings of Islam, and as a consequence laid down his own life. In Al-Sadr's own words, the *shahid's* (witness – person performing *shahada* or supervision) duties are 'to protect the correct doctrines and to see that deviations do not grow to the extent of threatening the ideology itself'.

List of works[9]

Jurisprudence

- 1. Buhuth fi Sharh al- 'Urvah al' Wuthqa (Discourses on the Commentary of al- 'Urvah al-Wuthqa), 4 volumes.
- 2. Al-Ta'liqah 'ala Minhaj al-Salihin (Annotation of Ayatullah Hakim's Minhaj al-Salihin), 2 volumes.
- 3. Al-Fatawa al-Wazihah (Clear Decrees).
- 4. Mujaz Ahkam al-Hajj (Summarized Rules of Hajj)
- 5. Al-Ta'liqah 'ala Manasik al-Hajj (Annotation of Ayatullah Khui's Hajj Rites).
- 6. Al-Ta'liqah 'ala Salah al-Jumu'ah (Annotation on Friday Prayer)

Fundamentals of the law

- 7. Durus fi Ilm al-Usul (Lessons in the Science of Jurisprudence), 3 Parts.
- 8. Al-Ma'alim al-Jadidah lil-Usul (The New Signposts of Jurisprudence).
- 9. Ghayah al-Fikr (The Highest Degree of Thought)

Philosophy

- 10. Falsafatuna (Our Philosophy)

Logic

- 11. Al-Usus al-Mantiqiyyah lil-Istiqra' (The Logical Basis of Induction)

Theology

- 12. Al-Mujaz fi Usul al-Din: al-Mursil, al-Rasul, al-Risalah (The Summarized Principles of Religion: The Sender, The Messenger, The Message).
- 13. Al-Tashayyu' wa al-Islam - Bahth Hawl al-Wilayah (Discourse on Divine Authority).
- 14. Bahth Hawl al-Mahdi (Discourse on Imam Mahdi)

Economics

- 15. Iqtisaduna (Our Economics).
- 16. Al-Bank al-la Ribawi fi al-Islam (Usury-free Banking in Islam).
- 17. Maqalat Iqtisadiyyah (Essays in Economy).

Qur'anic commentaries

- 18. Al-Tafair al-Mawzu'i lil-Qur'an al-Karim - al-Madrasah al-Qur'aniyyah (The Thematic exegesis of the Holy Qur'an).
- 19. Buhuth fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an (Discourses on Qur'anic Sciences).
- 20. Maqalat Qur'aniyyah (Essays on Qur'an).

History

- 21. Ahl al-Bayt Tanawwu' Ahdaf wa Wahdah Hadaaf (Ahl al- Bayt, Variety of Objectives Towards a Single Goal).
- 22. Fadak fi al-Tarikh (Fadak in History).

Islamic Culture

- 23. Al-Islam Yaqud al-Hayah (Islam Directive to Life).
- 24. Al-Madrasah al-Islamiyyah (Islamic School)
- 1. Al-Insan al-Mu'asir wa al-Mushkilah al-Ijtima'iyah (Modern Man and Social Problems)
- 2. Maza Tu'raf 'an al-Iqtisad al-Islami? (What could be Known of Islamic Economy?)
- 25. Risalatuna (Our Mission).
- 26. Nazrah Ammah fi al-Ibadat (General View on Rites of Worship).
- 27. Maqalat wa Muhazrat (Essays and Lectures)

Books

- Iqtisaduna
- Falsafatuna

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2. ^ Anthony Shadid, *Night Draws Near: Iraq's People in the Shadow of America's War*, (Holt, 2005), p.164
3. ^ a b Mohammed Baqir Al-Sadr, *Al-Islam yaqud al-hayat*, Qum, 1979, p.132
4. ^ Quran 5:44
5. ^ Baqir Al-Sadr, *Al-Islam yaqud al-hayat*, Qum, 1979, p.24
6. ^ Faleh A Jabar, *The Shi'ite Movement in Iraq*, London: Saqi Books, 2003, p.286
7. ^ Mohammed Baqir Al-Sadr, *Lamha fiqhiya*, p.20
8. ^ Mohammed Baqir Al-Sadr, *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*, London: ICAS, 2003, p.15
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 - Mallat, Chibli. "Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr." *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*. ed. Ali Rahnema. London: Zed Books, 1994
 - Arabic Biography

Shaheed Al-Iraq, Muhammad Baqir Al-Sadr

A four part documentary on the life of Shaheed Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr in the Arabic language. The documentary features his academic and

political life; and his innovative contributions in these fields. Shaheed Al-Sadr was martyred on the 9th of April 1980 alongside his sister Sayyeda Amina Al-Sadr, famously known as Bint Al-Huda. The AhlulBayt Islamic Mission presents this series, on the anniversary of their martyrdom, to commemorate these great beacons of light who, through their lives, contributions and esteem martyrdom, gave life to millions...

Arabic documentary on the life of Ayatollah Al-Mujahed Al-Shaheed Al-Sayyed Muhammad Baqir Al-Sadr

Shaheed Al-Iraq 1 of 4 ???? ?????? ????? ???? ???? ????? - Arabic

The Role of Muhammad Baqir Al-Sadr in Shi'a Political Activism in Iraq From 1958 to 1980

<http://islamicinsights.com/religion/history/sayyid-muhammad-baqir-al-sadr.html>

Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr

"It has become clear – although with great sorrow – that the deceased Ayatollah, the Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and his honorable, oppressed sister – who was among the teachers of knowledge and ethics and among the most prideful in knowledge and literature – have attained the elevated status of martyrdom at the hands of the Iraqi regime. And this was carried out in a terribly horrid way.

"But it is not a surprise that such great ones should be martyred – those who have spent their lives struggling in the way of Islamic goals – and at the hands of murderers who have wasted their lives in oppression and blood-sucking."

– From an announcement attributed to Imam Khomeini

His name was Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr. His ancestry could be traced back to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) through the Seventh Imam, Imam Musa al-Kadhim (peace be upon him). He was born on the 25th of Thil Hijjah, 1353 AH (March 1, 1935 CE) in the city of Kadhmiyya, Iraq.

Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr learned reading and writing at the Muntada al-Nashr elementary school in the city of Kadhmiyya. Even at a young age, his teachers and peers were amazed at his brilliance and ability to grasp advanced material. His ability was such that he studied most of the *Sutooh*-level books without a teacher.

When Sayyid al-Sadr turned 12, he started studying the book *Ma'aalim al-Usool* under his brother Sayyid Ismail al-Sadr. It is said that when

Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr would object to some aspects of the book, his brother would say, "These are the same objections that the author of *Kifaayat al-Usool* (which is among the highest, if not the highest, level books in seminary studies) had against the author of *Ma'aalim*." Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr then traveled to the holy city of Najaf to complete his Islamic studies.

While the entire duration of his studies, from beginning to end, did not exceed about 18 years, this period was lengthy in its quality. The Sayyid was always concerned with his studies, committing all his time to seeking knowledge. Some of Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr's teachers were Ayatollah Sayyid Abul Qasim al-Khoei, Ayatollah Sayyid Muhsin Tabatabai al-Hakim, and others.

Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr began giving lessons by the young age of 25, teaching the first round of *Ilm al-Usool* in Jamadi al-Thani, 1378 AH, and ending it in Rabee al-Awwal, 1391 AH. He started teaching *Bahth al-Khaarij* (external research in Islamic jurisprudence) in 1381 AH. A few of his students were the Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, the Martyr Sayyid Muhammad al-Sadr, and Sayyid Kamal al-Haidari.

Sayyid Baqir al-Sadr believed in the importance and necessity of establishing a mature Islamic government which would govern by the Divine message of Islam and reflect all the enlightening aspects of Islam. He believed that the leadership in Islamic work must be an aware *Marjaiyyat* – one which is fully aware of the circumstances, hopes and goals of the Muslim community. He was also concerned about the situation of the Islamic seminary, emphasizing the need to attract the youth to strengthen the seminary.

The Sayyid worked to change the curriculum in the Islamic Seminary to better suit the needs of society, because the old curriculums were not producing enough scholars in the appropriate time frame. To help solve this problem, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr wrote the revolutionary three *Halaqaat* (lessons in *Ilm al-Usool*).

Sayyid Kathem al-Husaini al-Haa'iri has described Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr as, "...the pride of his time...the genius of this age, the miracle of this century...a principled jurist, a Muslim philosopher...he was a *Marja'* among the *Maraja'* of the Muslims in Najaf...he started the Islamic revolution in Iraq and led it until he was martyred...."

In addition to his works on jurisprudence, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr penned many other books, including *Falsafatuna* and *Iqtisaduna*, ground-breaking works on Islamic philosophy and economics.

As the Ba'athists went about attacking the religious and cultural fabric of Iraq, the scholars of Najaf responded. At the forefront were Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and his sister Bintul Huda. Along with several notable scholars, including Martyr Sayyid Baqir al-Hakim and Allama Murtadha Askari, Baqir al-Sadr founded *Hizbul Dawatul Islamiya*, or the Islamic Call Party, in order to promote Islamic values and combat the socialist and secularist influences of the government. The party actively campaigned against the Ba'athists' reign of terror that shortly overtook the entire Iraqi nation. Meanwhile, his sister Amina Bintul Huda, a *Mujtahidah* herself, conducted a literary and academic struggle against the Ba'athists. She established schools for women, and she wrote numerous books and articles aimed at the women of Iraq in order to promote Islamic values.

After ten months of house-arrest, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and Bintul Huda were arrested on the 19th of Jamaadi al-Awwal, 1400 AH (April 1980).

On the night of April 9, 1980, the Ba'athist regime cut off the electricity from the holy city of Najaf and sent a security force to the home of their cousin Sayyid Muhammad al-Sadr. Sayyid Muhammad al-Sadr went with security force back to their headquarters, where they showed him the bodies of Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and Bintul Huda. Bathed in blood, the signs of torture were all over their bodies. Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and Bintul Huda were buried in the Wadi as-Salam graveyard in the holy city of Najaf that same night.

Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and Bintul Huda saw oppression and injustice around them, and they spoke up against it. In that sense, they were true followers of Imam Hussain and Lady Zainab (peace be upon them). Indeed, when Saddam was asked to spare Bintul Huda's life, he instantly remarked, "Kill the brother and spare the sister? You want me to make the same mistake as Yazid?!"

And yet, Saddam failed to learn from the mistakes of his predecessor. By assassinating Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and Bintul Huda, he actually helped give fresh blood to the Islamic revolutionary movements in Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Pakistan, and around the Muslim world. In their martyrdom, the two have become icons of the Shia revolutionary spirit. Leaked video footage of Saddam's execution shows witnesses shouting "Long Live Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr!" And plastered on walls and billboards all over Iraq today, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr's ubiquitous image continues to echo the words of Iqbal: "The murder of

executed. It has been alleged that Sadr was killed by having an iron nail hammered into his head and then being set on fire.

During the execution of Saddam Hussein, chants of "Long live Mohammed Baqir Sadr!" were heard being chanted by some of the Shi'a guards.

PDF

THE CONTRIBUTION OF MUHAMMAD BĀQIR AL-SADR TO CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC ECONOMIC THOUGHT

WILSON *Journal of Islamic Studies*.1998; 9: 46-59

Martyr al-Sadr(may His mercy be upon him) (... Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr who was a Muslim intellectual and it was hoped that Islam could profit more from him. And I hope this great man's books are studied by Muslims...) Imam Khumayni (may He be pleased with him), *Sahifa-ye Nur*, vol.14, p.177 (... his honored sister was a teacher of thought, ethics and pride of science and literature...) Imam Khumayni (may He be pleased with him), *Sahifa-ye Nur*, vol.12, p.56) A Brief Account of the Martyr Sayyid's Biography The martyr Sayyid's father is Sayyid Haydar al-Sadr who was born in Samarra' Iraq in 1309 A.H. He was a grand marja' (supreme religious authority) of his time. His livelihood was to an extent of humbleness that his family passed the night of his demise without super. He died in the city of Kazimayn, Iraq in 1359 A.H leaving three children: Sayyid Isma'il, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir and Sayyidah Aminah (Known as Bint al-Huda). The martyr Sayyid al-Sadr's mother was the Ayatullah Shaykh Muhammad Hassan Al Yassin's honored grand daughter; and the Ayatullah Shaykh' abd-ul Hussayn Al Yassin's daughter; and the sister of the grand Ayatullah Muhammad Rida Al Yassin, Ayatullah Murtada Al Yassin and Radi Al Yassin's.

The martyr Sayyid was born in the city of Kazimayn, Iraq on Dhill Qu'dah, 25, 1353 A.H/2.3.1933 CE. In early days of his childhood, he was deprived of fatherhood and brought up by his elder brother and bonored mother. He completed all hawzah (religious seminary) stages at the age of 25 in 1378 A.H/1958 CE. A year after that, he himself started teaching al-Bahth al-kharij (the top academic stage) at hawzah. His excellency got married with his paternal cousin (the Imam Musa al-Sadr and Ayatullah Sayyid Rida al-Sadr's sister and the grand Ayatullah Sayyid Sadr al-Din

al-Sadr's daughter).

Five children was the Fruit of the blessed marriage. They were: A son called sayyid Jafar and four girls that three of them got married with three sons of the martyr marja Sayyid Muhammad al-Sadr. Recently, two of their husbands (Sayyid Mustapha and Sayyid Muammal) were martyred along with their eminent father.

His most important activities:

1. Teaching al-Bahth al-Kharij (a top academic degree at hawzah) for more than twenty years.
2. Offering intellectual support to Jama't al-Ulama in Najaf at al-Adwa' magazine and other periodicals.
3. Offering intellectual support to Usul al-Din and Fiqh colleges.
4. Innovating a new institution for marja' iyyat in the Shi'ah world called al-Marja'iyyah al-Mawdu'iyyah (subjective majaiyyah).
5. Esteemed works in Economy, logic, usul, fiqh, principles of beliefs, etc.
6. Esteemed Political-intellectual stances in defense of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It suffices here to mention some of his brave-daring positions in defense of Imam Khumayni (may He be satisfied with him) as well as the Islamic Revolution when the Iraqi Ba'th party cast its fearful shadow over Najaf to an extent that people could hardly breathe: 1. Urging some of his students to attend the late Imam's lessons. 2. Paying visits to the Imam at his house. 3. Sending a detailed letter to the late Imam in Paris in 1357 A.H/1978. 4. Delivering lectures, extending congratulations and closing classroom on the occasion of the Islamic Revolution's Victory, while no other marja could have taken such a due measure in Najaf. 5. Calling for his supporters to hold demonstration in support of the Islamic Revolution and carrying the late Imam's pictures. 6. Writing a letter to his students who had migrated to Iran to Fully support the late Imam and be at the service of the Islamic Revolution. 7. Writing a letter to the Iranian Arabs of Khuzistan asking them to follow Imam's leadership, as some mysterious hands sought to sow discord between the Arabs and

the Islamic government. 8. At the outset of the Islamic Revolution's victory, he discerned the existence of deviated groups as a danger for the Revolution. Therefore, he started to write a series of "Islam leads the life" in order to stabilize the Revolution's ideological foundations. Six issues were published, but unfortunately, his martyrdom did not let the series to be continued. 9. His correspondence with the late Imam, when the Imam returned to Iran. 10. Holding a ceremony in commemoration of martyr Ayatullah Mutahhari.

His Arrest: 1. Recent days of Rajab 1392 A.H./ 1972 CE 2. In Safar 1397 A.H./1977 CE following the Safar rise of Iraqi people. 3. On Rajab, 17, 1399 A.H which Followed by Rajab rise of Iraqi People. 4. Eventually, after several abortive attempts, the martyr Sayyid was arrested on Saturday afternoon at 14:30 Jumada al-Ula 1400 A.H/April, 5,1980 CE. On April, 8, 1980 at about 22:00 Najaf's power was cut. At midnight, the Iraqi forces summoned the grand Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, the martyr sayyid's paternal cousin (the martyr marja Sayyid Munammd, and delivered the bloody and tortured bodies of the martyr and his sister. At the very midnight, they were buried at Wadi al-Salam of Najaf. His scholar and oppressed sister was his most powerful companion in this course.

An Introduction to His Scholarly Writings. Martyr Sayyid al-Sadr (may He be pleased with him), like every other scholar, had profounded thoughts and had no time to apply them; of course, regarding the martyr Sayyid its a double pity, for he was martyred at the age of 47. Above all, some of his works were robbed by Ba'thist executioners, namely, a book about analysing human thought related to philosophy of cognition and some other esteemed writings. His Most Scholarly characteristics 1. Comprehensiveness 2. Perfect comprehension in percieving discussed subjects. 3. Innovation 4. Regularity 5. Logical and conscientious tendency.

His Most Important Writings

1. Iqtisaduna (our economy), 2 vols.
2. Falsafatuna (our philosophy) which includes philosophy of knowledge and existence.

3. The Logical Basis of Induction, which includes a modern perspective on philosophy of knowledge as well as a new answer to the philosophical problem of induction.
4. Discourses in Jurisprudence, four vols. which includes three complete series of *Ilm al-usul* in three scholarly levels.
5. Discourses on Explanation of *al-ʿIrwat al-Wuthqa*, four vols. which includes argumentative-jurisprudential discourses. (may he rest in peace)

A part of the late Imam's message on the occasion of the martyrdom of the grand Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and his revered sister In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. "Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return" the Qur'an (2:156) With much regret, according to his excellency Mr. Minister of Foreign Affairs who received that from several sources and Muslim states authorities and according to other sources, the late martyr Ayatullah Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr along with his revered-oppressed sister who were of teachers of thought, ethics and eminents of knowledge and literature achieved high degree of martyrdom by the Iraq, debased Ba'thist regime in a heart-rending way. Martyrdom is an inheritance which is inherited by the authorized to these dear personalities. And crime and oppression are also inheritance which is inherited by their oppressive predecessors to these criminals of history. These eminents who have spent their lives for the cause of Islam and achieve martyrdom by criminals who have spent their lives in blood-sucking and oppression is not a surprise. It is surprise that mujahidin die in the way of the Truth, while the criminal-oppressive do not welter them in blood. In commemoration of this scholarly and mujahid figure who was of eminents of hawzah, religious authorities and Muslim intellectuals, I announce three days (from Wednesday, Urdibehesht, 3) as mourning and Thursday, Urdibehesht, 4 as a public holiday. May God compensate for this big loss and grant greatness to Islam and Muslims. And peace be upon the Allah's right servants. Ruhullah al-Musavi al-Khumayni 2.2.1359 S.H/ Sahifa-ye Nur

Chapter 17

Ayatullah al-Uzma al-Hajj as-Shaykh Mirza Jawad at-Tabrizi - (1926-2007)

AYATULLAH AL-UZMA AL-HAJJ ASH-SHAYKH MIRZA JAWAD AT-TABRIZI was born in 1926 in the city of Tabriz, Iran. After finishing his secular studies, and reaching the age of eighteen, he entered a theological school in his hometown.

Within four years of entering this, he managed to complete the preliminary and intermediate levels of his Islamic studies. In the year 1948, he migrated to Qum and finished other lessons at the intermediate level. In Qum he reached the Kharij level where he attended the lectures of the late Ayatullah al-Hujjat, and Ayatullah al-'Uzma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Burujerdi. Besides from studying, he also taught the intermediate to advanced courses of Islamic studies in Qum.

Ayatullah Mirza Jawad al-Tabrizi then migrated to Najaf al-Ashraf and was fortunate enough to benefit from eminent scholars such as the late Ayatullah al-Sayyid Abu al-Hadi ash-Shirazi, and the late Ayatullah al-'Uzma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Abu al-Qasim al-Khu'i, where he reached the level of Ijtihad. Ayatullah al-Tabrizi was invited by Ayatullah al-'Uzma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Abu al-Qasim al-Khu'i to join the Assembly of Consultants, which was an organized group of scholars that responded to the questions of the people.

Ayatullah al-Tabrizi stayed in the holy city of Najaf for about 23 years, leaving only in the holidays to do propagation in different countries. He later returned to Iran and began teaching Fiqh (Jurisprudence) and Usul (Principles of Jurisprudence) in the Islamic Seminary of Qum,

He passed away in 2007 & is buried in the qom shrine in iran

Details of his life & works is here ..

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Chapter 18

Ayatullah al-Uzma Marashi Najafi(R.A.) - (1897-1990)

Extracts of his Will

Founder of the Library

Ayatullah al-Uzma Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.), the leading jurist, the Grand Marja of the Shi'ites in the world, the great preserver of Islamic heritage, renowned jurisprudent, the great researcher, historian and genealogist.

Ayatullah al-Uzma Sayyid Shihab al-Din Hussaini al-Marashi al-Najafi was born on 20th the Safar 1315 A.H./ July 21, 1897 in the holy city of Najaf(Iraq) in a famous religious family renowned for its high knowledge and ardent faith. In the beginning he was taught by his learned father Ayatullah al-Uzma Sayyid Shams al-Din Mahmood Husaini al-Marashi al-Najafi (passed away in 1338 lunar Hijrah) who was one of the greatest Islamic jurisprudent of that era.

He also learned Qur'anic sciences and its exegesis, fundamentals of jurisprudence, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, Rijal, Dirayah and theology from a large group of well-known professors in the Hawzah (Islamic seminaries) in the holy city of Najaf (Iraq), which was one of the greatest Islamic seminary in the Islamic world.

He attained the highest degree of Ijtihad in a short period and became renowned amongst the scholars for his in depth research and also for lecturing religious sciences in the seminary.

Some years later Ayatullah al-Uzma Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) went to mashhad(Iran) to perform the ziyarah of Imam Reza(A.S.). On his return he stayed in Tehran to pursue his studies and researches.

After a year stay in Tehran he decided to move to the holy city of Qom to attend the lectures of Ayatullah al-Uzma Shaykh Abdul Karim Haeri al-Yazdi, the founder of the Hawzah (Islamic Seminary) in Qom. On his arrival in Qom he also began lecturing in the Islamic seminary as well as attended the advanced courses in jurisprudence lectured by Ayatullah al Uzma Haeri al-Yazdi.

He decided to stay in the holy city of Qom and very soon emerged as a leading professor in the Hawzah.

After a short time the leading Ulama and professors of the Islamic seminary of Qom declared him as the Grand

Marja(religious leader) of the Shi'ites in the world. Millions of the Shi'ites in Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Kuwait, U.A.E, Bahrain, Pakistan, India, Turkey, Tanzania, Kenya, Zanzibar and the eastern provinces of Saudi Arabia followed his rulings in Islamic jurisprudence.

Ayatullah al-Uzma Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) was the leading professor in the Hawzah of Qom for more than 67 years. His lectures every day was attended by hundreds of Ulama and Tullab (seminary students). He also led the daily congregational prayers in the holy shrine of Hadrat Fatima Masoomah(A.S.) for more than half a century.

Ayatullah al-Uzma Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) dedicated all his efforts towards the progress and advancement of the Hawzah in the holy city of Qom. He trained hundreds of jurisprudents and theologians who later on became famous professors in Hawzah and the universities in Iran and abroad.

He wrote outstanding books in almost all the Islamic sciences. most of them were written in Arabic and they are as follows:

* Molhaqat al Ahqaaq * Al Hashiyah Ala al-Orwat al-Wothqa * Minhaj al-Momineen * Taqirrat al-Qusas * Tabaqat al-Nassabeen

* Al-Hashiyah Ala Kifayah al-Usul * Al-Hashiyah Ala Al-Rasail * Al Mashhahed Wal Mazarat * Aayan al-Marashieen

* Al-Moawal Fee Amr al-Motawal * Ulama al-Sada'at * Masareh al-Afkar Wa al-Hashiyah Ala Taqirrat al Shaykh al-Murtuza al-Ansari

* Al-Fawa'id al-Rijaliyah * Kashf al-Irtiyab * Al Mujdi Fi Hayat Saheb al-Mujdi * Raf al-Ghashiyah An Wajh al-Hashiyah

* Al-Rad Ala Moddae'i al-Tahreef * Taliqah Ala Omdat al-Taleb * Mushajjarat Aal Rasool Allah al-Akram

* Rehlah Isfahan, Shiraz, Samarrah Wa Azarbaijan.

The Prominent Personalities Who Met Ayatullah al-Uzma Marashi Al-Najafi(R.A.)

- 1) The famous Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore.
- 2) Rashid Raza, the Egyptian author of Tafseer al-Manar.
- 3) Shaykh al-Tantawi al-Jawhari, the famous Egyptian author of Tafseer al-Jawaher.
- 4) The Cardinal Al-Kermily from Baghdad(Iraq).
- 5) Henry Corbin, the famous French philosopher and orientalist.

6) Shaykh Muhammad Bin Zebarah, the famous historian from Yemen.

One of the most famous and important cultural services of Imam Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) was the establishment of a grand library in the holy city of Qom which has international reputation and prestige to its credit. This library is considered as the greatest cultural heritage in the history of Iran. Imam Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) is also famous as "The Greatest Preserver of the Islamic Heritage" in the world's scientific circles and centres.

After rendering selfless service in the fields of learning, teaching and disseminating Islamic culture for nearly a century, Imam Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) passed away after suffering a heart attack on Wednesday, 29 August 1990. He was 96 years of age.

On Friday, 31 August 1990, millions of devoted Shi'ites from throughout Iran and various countries carried the holy remains of Imam Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) in the historical funeral procession which was attended by all the Grand Marja, Ulama, Tullab, high-ranking government and military officials of Iran and diplomatic staff of the many Islamic countries based in Tehran. As per his last will he was laid to rest at the entrance of the Grand Library which was established by his ceaseless and incessant efforts. His last will states: "Bury me at the entrance of the library so that the feet of the researchers of Islamic sciences step beside my grave."

Library's Development Stages

The first step of constructing the library was achieved when the great founder was busy studying in the Islamic seminary of Najaf.

He was the first person to compile the index of the manuscripts and the rare published books which was considered as an outstanding achievement. Imam Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) used to sell his clothes and his household equipments to buy books and manuscripts. He took lots of pain and trouble in this sacred endeavour. He used to avoid eating one of his daily meals in order to save money to buy the rare printed books and manuscripts. He also used to perform the fasting and Namaz of the deceased persons and the money paid for this pious acts were dedicated by him to buy the manuscripts.

The books which he inherited from his late father also played an important role in providing the library with books at its initial stage. Imam Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) migrated from Najaf(Iraq) to Iran in 1342 A.H./ 1923 A.D., and carried with himself all the books which he had

bought and inherited in Najaf and preserved them in his residence in Qom. He continued collecting and buying manuscripts and other rare printed books. In 1959, he presented 278 rare manuscripts in Arabic and Persian to Tehran University's

College of Theology and Divinity. He also presented numerous rare manuscripts and valuable printed books to many of the leading libraries in Iran.

After establishing "Marashiyah Islamic Seminary" in the holy city of Qom in 1385 A.H./ 1965 A.D., he reserved a couple of rooms of the seminary for the library. That was the turning point in this glorious and shining path of establishing a grand library.

During the same year the library was inaugurated in the third floor of the Islamic seminary. A vast collection of manuscripts and rare printed books were transferred to this library.

The increasing number of researchers who daily visited this library made this small but very rich library over crowded. Thus, 1000 sq.meters of adjoining land was bought and attached to "Marashiyah Islamic Seminary" in the year 1390 A.H./ 1970 by Imam Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.). On 15th Shaban 1394 A.H./ 1974, the reference section of Ayatullah Marashi Najafi's library was inaugurated with the collection of 1600 rare manuscripts and thousands of printed books and soon after another 500 rare manuscripts were added to the treasury of the library.

In the course of time the library emerged as the centre of the scholars and researchers. With the gradual increase in the number of the visitors the space shortage was once again felt by the library. In 1989, Imam Khomeini(R.A.), the founder of Islamic Republic of Iran issued a decree ordering the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for implementing the plans for the manifold expansion of the library in according to with the master plan for expansion as prepared by Hojjat al-Islam Dr Mahmud Marashi, the president of the library.

On 20th Zee-al-Hajjah 1410 A.H./ 1989, Imam Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.) laid the foundation stone of the new grand building. The new building possesses seven stories and occupies a total area of 16000sq. meters . At present both the old and the new buildings of the grand library occupies a total area of 21,000 sq. meters.

Mailing Address:

**The Grand Library of Ayatullah al-Uzma Marashi
Najafi(R.A.).**

Ayatullah Marashi Najafi(R.A.) Avenue.
P.O.Box.No: 37157.
Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran.
Tel: 0098-251-7741970-78
Fax: 0098-251-7743637
Websites:<http://www.marashilibrary.com>
<http://www.marashilibrary.net>
<http://www.marashilibrary.org>
E.mail:sm_marashi@marashilibrary.org
The Aims:

The great founder of this library established this grand library with the aim of collecting and preserving the manuscripts for the purpose of research and analysis by the scholars and researchers. These aims have been achieved by implementing the following measures:

- 1 - Establishing this Great International Islamic Cultural Centre which helps in developing and describing the tremendous and extensive scientific achievements of the Islamic culture and civilization during the last fourteen centuries.
- 2 - Creating excellent group discussions and research facilities for the researchers in the library.
- 3 - Keeping at the disposal of the researchers the valuable manuscripts preserved in this great center which exhibits and manifests for them the written Islamic culture and heritage in different fields and branches of sciences and arts. Many of the rare manuscripts have been edited after undergoing a thorough process of extensive research and analysis.
- 4 - Collecting and preserving the exquisite and rare manuscripts in this great centre.
- 5 - Providing the microfilms and photocopies of the manuscripts preserved in other libraries of the world.
- 6 - Delivering this vast treasure of Islamic heritage preserved in this great library to the next generations so that they can know

about their glorious past, culture, civilization and heritage.

7 - The photocopies, microfilms and slides of all the manuscripts preserved in this library are made available. All the safety measures and the international standards for book-keeping and preservation are strictly implemented in this library.

Library's Departments and Sections

This grand library comprises of various departments and sections which are directly administered by the president of the library. Imam Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.), delegated the administration and management of the library to his son and chief trustee, Hojjat al-Islam Dr Mahmud Marashi about 35 years ago.

The various departments and sections of the grand library are as follows:

A - The President's Office:

This section comprises of the president's office room, reception room, the private secretary's room, assistance room and the office room of the manager of the women's section. The president is the chief executive of the library and runs the administration.

The president's office consists of various departments which are as follows:

1 - Endowments Department:

This department looks after the administration of all the properties like residential buildings and commercial complexes endowed to the grand library by philanthropists in Qom, Tehran and Isfahan.

2 - Public Relations and International Affairs Department:

This department is in charge of the invitations and reception's timetables for the Iranian and foreign guests, releasing the news regarding the activities of the library, establishing relations with international cultural centers and libraries, organizing and managing conferences, exhibitions, visits, scientific competitions,

evaluating the visitors ideas and opinions about the library and preparing the monthly and annual statistics.

3 - Ceremonies and Reception Department:

This department is in charge of welcoming and receiving the Iranian and foreign guests, providing the necessary information regarding the library's different sections and departments, presenting gifts to the guests and so forth. Every season more than 2000 guests visit the library which also includes more than 200 high-ranking visitors and scholars from various countries.

4 - Secretariat Department:

This department carries out all the internal and external correspondence duties.

5 - Women's Department:

This department takes the responsibility of assisting women researchers and scholars to get access to scientific sources and references available in the grand library.

6 - Correspondence Department:

This department has the responsibility to post, deliver or exchange books to some organizations or individuals as approved by the president of the library.

B - Public Services Division

This section is in charge of rendering services to the visitors and researchers in the various halls and reading rooms of the library. It consists of:

1 - Ibn Sina Hall: This hall occupies an area of 2200 sq. meters with 750 persons seating capacity. More than 2000 persons visit this hall daily during the morning and evening working hours.

2 - Exclusive Reading Hall for the Hawzah (Islamic Seminary)

Books:

This hall is exclusively assigned for the study and research of the scholars and students of the Islamic seminaries.

3 - Khaja Nasir al-Din Tusi Auditorium:

This auditorium has a seating capacity of 200 persons and various national and international seminars and symposiums are conducted in this auditorium.

4 - Shaykh Mufid Hall:

In this hall local conferences, seminars and academic sessions are regularly conducted.

5 - Book Exhibition Hall:

In this hall the library's publications are displayed for the visitors.

C - Reference Section:

This department has the following divisions:

1 - Manuscripts Treasury:

The manuscript copies present in the treasury till the end of October, 2001 was more than 60,000 volumes comprising 32,000 titles of books. Sixty five percent of these manuscripts are in Arabic and the rest of them are in Persian. A few Turkish, Urdu, Abyssinian, Syriac and Latin manuscripts are also available in the treasury.

Every year about 500-800 other valuable and rare manuscripts are added to this great collection either gifted or procured.

The copies of the Holy Qur'an in Kufic script belonging to the second century Hijrah comprises the oldest copies preserved in the manuscript treasury of the library. The manuscript copies of third and fourth century Hijrah are also available and the oldest among them is the illustrated copy of the Holy Qur'an calligraphed in 392 A.H./ 1002 A.D., by Ali ibn Hilal Baghdadi also famous as Ibn Bawwab, the renowned calligraphist of the fourth century Hijrah.

Till now the catalogue of 12,000 manuscripts available in the library has been published in 30 volumes. The complete catalogue of the manuscripts of this grand library will be published in 90 volumes series.

2 - Photographs of the Manuscripts:

This section preserves more than 4000 photographed copies of the

priceless and valuable manuscripts obtained from the different libraries in the world.

3 - Microfilm Section

In this section the microfilms of more than 13000 rare manuscripts are available.

4 - Documents Treasury

This section consists of more than one hundred thousand written documents belonging to the last five centuries.

5 - Permanent Exhibition of the Rare Manuscripts.

6 - Permanent Exhibition of the Books and Documents Written by the Founder of the Library.

7 - Rare Printed Books Store

Some of the rare printed books dating back to last five centuries are preserved in this store.

8 - Rare Petrography Store

9 - The Treasuries of Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Urdu Books.

The treasuries of the books in the above- mentioned languages are located in the three floors of this grand library building.

10 - Newspapers and Periodicals Section:

In this section more than 2500 newspapers and periodicals in Persian, Arabic Turkish and Urdu are kept at the disposal of the visitors.

11 - Open Reference Book Store

12 - The Store of the Islamic Manuscripts' Catalogues of the different libraries in the world.

13 - The Store of the Periodicals in Foreign Languages.

14 - The Archives of the Forbidden Books.

15 - The Store of Maps and Geographical Charts.

16 - The Store of the Extra Copies of the Printed Books.

17 - The Grand Reading Hall.

18 - The Special Section for the Research Scholars of the Manuscripts and Rare Documents.

19 - The Centre for Qom Studies.

20 - The Centre for Genealogical Studies.

21 - The Centre for Preparing the Index and the Catalogues of the Manuscripts.

22 - The Centre for Publishing the Works of the Founder of the grand Library.

23 - Islamic Manuscripts Edition and Research Department.

D - Administrative Department: It includes the financial, staff affairs and training units.

E - Public Services Department:

It consists of eighteen different sections such as: Computing Services, Telephone Exchange, Wireless Connections, Electronic Mail (e-mail) Services, Publication and Distribution, Conducting Seminars and Exhibitions Affairs, Maintenance of the Guest Houses and Restaurants, Purchase and Exchange of Books and Reference Materials, Photo Xerox, Office of Technical Advisors, Mirath Shahab Journal Office, Finance Office, Translation Department, Management and Programming Office, Library's Sub-divisions, Technical Support and Building Security Sections.

F - Book Information Research Centre

G - Manuscripts and Documents Preservation Unit

This unit includes the following sections: 1 - Book Preservation Section:

In this section books are fumigated and made free from pests and termites 2 - Books and Documents Mending Section: This section is the important and sensitive section of the library. 3 - Micrographic Centre: this centre preserves 50 million book titles in different languages in the form of minimized films. This section is also equipped with optical cleaner which is in turn connected to internet through computers. 4 - The Modern Laboratory: It is also equipped with ultra-modern and sophisticated equipments such as electronic microscopes which are connected to internet through computers.

H - Exquisite Objects Museum

It exhibits various types of valuable and exquisite compasses, astrolabes, coins, keys etc

I - The Centre of the Encyclopedia of the Libraries in the World.

Publications

1 - Mirath Shahab Journal: A specialized journal in Persian dealing with the study of bibliography and its related subjects. The chief editor of this journal is Dr Mahmud Marashi, the President of the Grand Library. Till now 30 issues of this journal has been published.

2 - The Grand Library till the end of 2002 has published 165 titles of books comprising 405 volumes.

This grand library also enjoys the rare distinction of preserving the largest collection of rare manuscripts in Iran and in this regard it also stands third in the Islamic world.

The library has also published the "Molhaqat Ihqaq al-Haq in 36 volumes written by Ayatullah al-Uzma Marashi al-Najafi(R.A.), the late founder of the grand library. In 1994, this book received the "Book of the Year Award" from the government of Iran.

The library's working hours for the visitors is from 7 A.M till 9.30 P.M., without any interval.

The membership cards are provided free of cost to the researchers, scholars and students by the secretariat of the library.

The daily average number of visitors to the library is more than 2000 visitors.

Chapter 19

Ayatullah Al-Uzama Mohammed Ali Araki - (1894-1994)

Birth 1894

Death 1994

Age 100 yrs

Ayatullah Araki began his Hawza studies in Arak, and was the student of many prominent scholars during this time, including Syed Jaffer Sheeshi. For many years, he attended

the lessons of Ayatullah Al-Uzama Nurudin Araki and Ayatullah Haeri and gained a tremendous amount from them.

Ayatullah Haeri had a great fondness for Ayatullah Araki; it was the aptitude and the genius of Ayatullah Araki that caught the late Ayatullah's attention. It was at the recommendation

of Ayatullah Haeri that Ayatullah Araki became a Ruhani (this is when someone qualifies to wear the turban and the robe) and married someone from his own family.

His migration to Qom:

After studying for a number of years in the Hawza in Yazd, Ayatullah Araki followed Ayatullah Haeri to Qom, and continued his Hawza studies under Ayatullah Haeri's

guidance and supervision. It was also during this very period that Ayatullah Araki got to know Ayatullah Khomeini, and had intense love for him.

After Imam Khomeini's exile in the Iranian year 1341 (approx. 1962 AD), Ayatullah Araki always used to support him and stuck picture upon picture of Imam Khomeini on

Khiyaban Iram (a main road in Qom passing the haram). When Ayatullah Araki was returning from Madressa Faiziya, and his eyes used

to fall on the picture of the Imam, he used to say: "I swear that if the person on this picture was in Kerbala, he would have become a martyr on the lap of Imam Hussein

B. When he used to go home and news of Imam Khomeini used to be given to him, he used to cry a great deal. His tears were tears of love for the late Imam Khomeini.'

Ayatullah Araki used to teach and put forth the most complex of subjects for over 35 years in the Hawza of Qom. He was known for not being repetitive and used to carefully choose his words that would be full of meaning.

After the death of Ayatullah Mohammed Taqi Khonsari, Ayatullah Araki received numerous requests from his (Ayatullah Khonsari's) students to teach them Fiqh and Usul

at the Dars-e-Kharij level to which he obliged to. Many of the outstanding and prominent teachers in the Hawza of Qom and those in charge of the movement of the Islamic Revolution

were students of Ayatullah Araki for many years. During his blessed life, Ayatullah Araki was also a Marja-e-Taqlid of the Shias and wrote many books in the field of Fiqh and Usul.

He was also an Imam of the Friday Prayers.

AYATULLAH AL-U²MA AL-HAJJ ASH-SHAYKH 'AL« ARAK« was born in the early 1890's, but the exact date is not known due to the lack of appropriate birth records at the time, in the Iranian city of Arak.

Following his preliminary religious studies, he demonstrated an aptitude to further his Islamic studies, and commented on the scholarly book, '*Urwatul Wuthqa* some 48 years ago (1952). This is a book upon which all Mujtahidin comment as soon as they are recognized as an expert in independent theological studies, according to their views. At the time of his review of '*Urwatul Wuthqa*, he was in the company of such great leaders as Ayatullah al-'U²ma Khonsari, and others. Although he was learned and a declared Mujtahid, following the demise of Ayatullah al-'U²ma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Khusani and Ayatullah al-'U²ma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Mu'ammad Hussein al-Burujerdi, he did not openly declare his Marja'iyah. He was one of Imam Khomeini's teachers, having taught the *Founder of the Islamic Republic* the initial course of the Hawza entitled *Jami'atul Muqaddamat*. In other classes, he was a contemporary of the late Imam.

Ayatullah al-'U'ma al-Hajj ash-Shaykh 'Ali Araki was a strong encouragement to the Islamic Republic, and frequently guided the government whenever requested. Upon the demise of Ayatullah Khomeini, many of his Muqalladin followed Ayatullah Araki. At the demise of the Grand Ayatullah al-'U'ma al-Hajj ash-Sayyid Abu al-Qasim al-Khoe'i (May Allah raise his rank), the Jamiatul Mudarrasin (Council of the Theological Schools) in Qum declared in a communique, the top most Marja' to be either Ayatullah al-'U'ma al-Hajj ash-Shaykh 'Ali Araki or Ayatullah al-'U'ma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Mu'ammad Ri'a al-Gulpaygani, preferring the later, and on December 10, 1993, following the departure of Ayatullah al-'U'ma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Mu'ammad Ri'a al-Gulpaygani from this mortal world, the Council declared the grand Ayatullah Araki to be the Marja' for the Shi'a world.

Ayatullah Araki, up until his death used to lead students of the Hawza Faiziyah in the congregational Salat. His teaching was active right up to his hospitalization. The President of the Council, Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini, in his Friday sermon on December 10, 1993, said that the Shaykh was "since the time of the late Shaikh 'Abdul Karim Ha'iri (founder of the Qum Theological Center), one of the most brilliant personalities in the field of theology and religious sciences, and a friend among the Ulama..."

Ayatullah Y'usuf Sana'i also of Qum said that the Grand Ayatullah has "a high expertise in fiqh and its different topics and also is skillful in manipulating the principle maxims of jurisprudence." As for his piety, Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli mentioned in a statement that the Ayatullah protected his "soul from wordly desires and his obedience to the Sacred Existence of the Master of the Seen and Unseen..."

The grand Ayatullah died on the 25th of Jumadi al-Akhar, 1994, one year to the day of the demise of Ayatullah al-'U'ma al-Hajj as-Sayyid Mu'ammad Ri'a al-Gulpaygani, and was buried in Qum on Thursday the 27th of Jumadi al-Akhar.

Chapter 20

Grand Ayatullah Mohamed Taqi Behjat (R.A.) - (1915-2009)

Biography & Studies

Grand Ayatullah Muhammad Taqi Behjat Fumani was born into a religious and pious family in the year 1334AH (1915CE) in Fuman in North Iran. & returned back to his lord on 17 May 09 in Qom.

He lost his mother before he was 2 years old. About his **father, Mahmood Behjat**, family members relate an interesting event.

When his father was around 16-17 years of age, he fell seriously ill and they thought he would not survive. When the relatives gathered around this young man, one of the family members heard a voice saying, "*Do not worry, he will be fine, because he is going to be the father of Muhammad Taqi.*" After this event, the youth soon recovered from his illness, got married a few years later and had several sons. He named his third son Muhammad Taqi in memory of the event of his childhood. However, in infancy, this child fell into a pond and was drowned. He had one more son after him, and he also named him Muhammad Taqi. This last son grew up to be the **great scholar and 'arif, Ayatullah Behjat**.

His father was a reciter of marsiyas and he would often take the young Agha Behjat with him to his recitals, thus inculcating in him a deep and abiding love for Sayyid al-Shuhada (A.S.).

From a young age he showed signs of genius and a great thirst for acquiring knowledge. After his primary studies, he went straight into religious studies, and at the age of 14, he moved to Kerbala. Four years later he came to the famous seminary of Najaf, where he had an opportunity to study under some of the best teachers and scholars in the Muslim world. He studied **Usul** under *Grand Ayatullahs Abu'l Hasan Isfahani, Mirza Na'ini and Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Gharawi Isfahani (known as Kumpani)*, and **Fiqh** under *Ayatullah Mirza Muhammad Taqi Shirazi*. He

studied the **philosophical texts of Ibn Sina and Mulla Sadra** under *Ayat. S. Hasan Badkubeyi*.

At the same time as attending the intermediate and higher levels of religious studies, he was very meticulous in his pursuit of **spiritual and mystical instruction**. In this regard, his teachers were *Ayatullah Muhammad Hasan Isfahani* and *Ayatullah Sayyid Abdu'l Ghaffar*, and finally, the Godly scholar, the matchless instructor, the giant amongst spiritual masters, *Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Qadhi Tabataba'i*. **He remained with his last teacher for many years, learning from him the secrets of the higher paths of Akhlaq and 'Irfan.**

15 years later, he returned to Iran and settled in Qum. Here, in the company of *Ayatullah Khomeini*, *Ayatullah Gulpaygani* and other great future figures, he continued his studies under *Grand Ayatullah Burujerdi*.

His Character and Qualities

1. Piety and Self-Building

From his youth, Agha Behjat was constantly engaged in self-purification and self-building. In his ethical instructions, he always insists that one should work hard at this task and forego and abandon many luxuries in order to make headway against the endless demands of the soul.

He is of the opinion that in order to succeed in this *jihad al-akbar*, ethical purity (*akhlaq*) and knowledge (*'ilm*) go hand in hand. In fact he considers knowledge without self-purification, to be the more damaging than anything else. His famous advice to youths is 'to read and practise one *hadith* daily from the Chapter of *Jihad al-nafs* in *Wasail al-Shi'a* of Shaykh Hurr al-Amili.[1]

By his deeds and words, this great scholar has always directed himself to God alone. **A great mujtahid has said about Agha Behjat, "It cannot be just said about him that he is a man of piety; in fact he is the true essence and manifestation of *taqw'a*."**

Ayatullah Shaykh Javad Kerbalayi says about him, "One of his close students (in Najaf) reports that every night, or in fact at most times, Agha Behjat sits alone, deep in thought and contemplation. **He never wastes a moment of his time, and does not participate in vain gatherings.** When the time comes for his class, or his *ziyarat* of Amirul Mu'mineen (A), he

gets up abruptly, puts on his cloak and leaves the house without interfering in the activities of others. **He is extremely reserved and does not like to reveal anything about himself, especially about the special favours and extraordinary spiritual powers that God has granted him."**

2. His Asceticism (Zuhd) and Simple Lifestyle

The close servants of God always look at the reality of this world, contrary to other human beings whose eyes are fixed on its pleasures and luxuries. By foregoing material comforts, they attain spiritual strength, and while the rest of the people stumble in this dark world, these *awliya* soar in the illuminated heights in proximity to God.

Agha Behjat is one of the most glowing examples of these *awliya* in our times. He is a mystic and scholar who has always lived a simple life, without the remotest material attachments. He has understood more completely than others the reality of this world and the worthlessness of its pleasures.

He lives in a simple, small and old house and has resisted the many offers from relatives and well-wishers to move to more comfortable accommodation. *Ayatullah Misbah says, "For many years, he has lived in a rented house with two rooms. One of the rooms has a curtain, which he would draw when we would visit him. On the other side of the curtain his family would carry on with their household chores. We would sit on one side of this curtain and benefit greatly from his wisdom. Although simple, the atmosphere was always full of a special *nur* and spirituality..."*

*Ayatullah Mas'udi says, "Many times people would sincerely offer to purchase a better house for him, but he would not agree. I myself told him, "Agha! This house is damaged, I doubt if even the *sharia* allows for a man to live in this sort of accommodation!", but he would not pay any attention."*

3. His Worship

Agha Behjat's students report that he has a special closeness to God, that is immediately evident in his manner of worship. **Those who have prayed behind him have described it 'as a spiritually uplifting and unique experience'.** In fact, the Fatimiyyah mosque at the end of the Guzarkhan market, where he has led prayers three times a day for the

last 40 years, is always full at prayer time. High ranking scholars make a special effort to come and pray behind him. *Allamah Tabataba'i* would come here to pray. **Almost as soon as Agha Behjat begins his prayer, tears flow from his eyes - frequently he has to pause because his voice is choked with emotion - such is his awe in God's presence.**

One of the scholars remarks, "In the early days, Agha Behjat would go to the undeveloped part of Qum, past some farms, and recite his evening prayers with some companions in that remote location. **One day, after the *maghribain* prayers, he commented, "If only the kings of this world realised how much pleasure a servant experiences in worship, they would never even glance at the worldly delights..."**

Ayatullah Shaykh Javad Kerbalayi says, "Agha Behjat never misses his late night prayers (*namaze-shab*) and spends a long time weeping in the middle of the night, especially on the night preceding Friday."

A scholar reports, "I came upon him one Thursday night in Madressay-e-Sayyid in Najaf. I saw him weeping and crying in prostration. He was repeating in a broken voice over and over, "**Ilahi! Man li ghayruk, asaluhu kashfa dhurri, wan-nazara fi amri?! (My Lord! Who have I got besides You, Who I can ask for relief and support?)"**

4. His Ziyarat and Tawassul (Saluting the Ahlul Bayt (A.S.))

Despite his advanced years, the daily routine of Agha Behjat has remained unchanged. **Early every morning (exactly at 7.00am), he presents himself at the shrine of Lady Fatima Masuma (A.S.) to pay his respects and send salutations. With the greatest of humility, he stands near her *Zarih*, and recites the Ziyarate Ashura of Imam Husain (A.S.).**

Sayyid Muhammad Husein Tehrani, in his book, *Anwar al-Malakut*, quotes *Ayatullah Shaykh Abbas Quchani*, the great scholar and spiritual successor of the famous *Mirza Ali Qadhi Tabataba'i*, as narrating: "While he was in Najaf, Agha Behjat would often go to Masjid-e Sahlah and spend whole nights alone there in worship and contemplation. On one very dark night, when the lights in the mosque were not lit either, he needed to go out to refresh his *wudhu*."

He went out of the mosque towards the *wudhu* area to the east of the mosque. Suddenly he experienced some anxiety and fear, perhaps due to the total darkness. Immediately, a light appeared next to him, by

which he could clearly see his way. This light accompanied him while he went out, made *wudhu* and returned to his place in the mosque. Then it disappeared.”.

5. His humbleness

One of his noticeable traits is his humbleness and simplicity, despite his fame and status as a leading contemporary scholar and jurist. For many years he had refused to print his religious edicts (*tawdhih al-masail*) and he only agreed after much pressure. When he is scheduled to lecture he requests that his name not be mentioned as the lecturer.

A scholar reports, “Once I went with my guest, Shaykh Nasrullah Lahuthi, to visit Agha Behjat. Agha Lahuthi said to his teacher, “Agha! I was in Mashhad and someone was criticising you, and I became very annoyed.” **Agha Behjat responded, “We have reports in the *ahadith*, that if a scholar pays too much attention to worldly matters, then he will be criticized by others.”** I remember thinking, “If the way Agha Behjat lives is called “paying too much attention to worldly matters”, then what about us!”

6. His Mystical Wayfaring (*sayr wa suluk*) and his Spiritual Station

Ayatullah Behjat has many decades of experience in mystical wayfaring, the special journey through established stations that the soul undertakes to attain proximity to God. He is one of the outstanding pupils of the great master, *Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Qadhi Tabataba’i* and had received special instructions from his teacher. Even as a youth, he had passed many stations of the spiritual path.

His elevated rank in these matters is well known by others who travel this path; immediately after the revolution, one of the first scholars that *Ayatullah Khomeini* visited was Ayatullah Behjat in Qum. Similarly, when *Ayatullah Khamene’i* assumed the position of Rahbar, he first came to Agha Behjat in Qum for spiritual instructions.

7. His Awareness of the Unseen (*Ghayb*) and his Wondrous Acts (*Karamat*)

Unlike the majority of men, who have no idea of the existence or happenings of the unseen world, Ayatullah Behjat has reached a

station, by the grace of God, where he frequently witnesses the events that occur in that world.

In fact, a reminder of this ability is his constant repetition of the Divine name "*al-Sattaar*" - the Concealer. This *dhikr* and *tasbih* is constantly on Agha Behjat's lips, whether he is walking or sitting. *Ayatullah Misbah Yazdi* says in this regard, **"It seems that he is at the level where he witnesses many things from *ghayb*. Often he is aware of the real nature and inner secrets of those who sit around him, and he invokes God, who is the Concealer of defects - *al-Sattaar al-'Uyub*, so that the secrets of the people around him may be concealed from him."**

This is usually the way of these close servants of God. Their humbleness is such that they would not like to display anything, or do anything, that will bring about even a trace of pride in themselves. And in return for their utter humility, God grants them even greater insight and status.

There is no doubt in the minds of those who know Agha Behjat well, that he is one of those for whom many secrets are revealed. *Ayatullah Misbah* says in this regard, **"Those who have been around him for many years have seen things that he has done or said that are truly extraordinary.** He sometimes says something that seems quite normal, but on later contemplation, one realises that it was due to some special knowledge that he possessed.

For example, when *Imam Khomeini* was in exile in Turkey, many of his students would make statements in his defence and get into trouble with the government. They would be imprisoned and frequently tortured. I remember distinctly when *Agha Jannati* was captured and no one knew where he had been taken. I mentioned it to Agha Behjat, who said, **"Inshallah, you will soon inform me of his release."** Of course, some might say this was just a prayer, but in fact, he did not make such statements about every prisoner. Many times we would say, "pray for so and so," but he would remain silent. **Just as he had promised, Agha Jannati was released soon without having been hurt."**

One of his students says, **"My wife was expecting a child. It was the month of Ramadhan, and I wanted to go on a journey, so I came to Agha Behjat to say goodbye. He turned to me and said, "In this month, you will be blessed with a baby boy, name him Muhammad**

Hasan.” This is exactly what transpired.” There are many such episodes that people have related about their encounters with Agha Behjat.

Agha Behjat himself dislikes a lot of fuss made about these episodes but his students occasionally narrate them so the *mu'mineen* may realise that there exist in our times certain individuals, to whom God has granted special favours.

Certainly, for the one who sincerely strives in God's way, then He Himself becomes their guide, “*And (as for) those who strive hard for Us, We will most certainly guide them in Our ways. (Ankabut, 29/69)*”

Drinking from the Fountain of the Wisdom of Ayatullah Behjat

In this section we will examine several examples of the advice and replies of Agha Behjat to questions about different matters.

1. How to counter and cure *riya* (showing off or trying to impress others while engaged in acts of worship)

A student in the Hawza of Qum relates that Agha Behjat was once asked, “Sometimes a person decides to perform a virtuous act sincerely for God, but Shaytan converts his intention and the person starts to think instead about how people will be impressed, how he will become popular, etc., when he performs the act. Are these thoughts counted as *riya*, and do they nullify his virtuous act and make it worthless?”

Agha Behjat stated in reply, “*Riya* is only relevant in acts of worship (*ibadat*). And any act of worship that has *riya* associated with it is a sin, and it makes the act null and void.

However, *riya* itself can become a counter and cure for *riya*, by simply changing the focus of who one is trying to impress! If a man can approach a president to sort out his problem directly, would he waste time in trying to convince the president's servants? In the same manner, if a man has sense, he would raise his sights from the people, and attempt to impress and perfect his actions for God, who is the Creator of man - this attitude would itself become the cure for his *riya*.”

At another time, he said, “About *riya*, there is a *hadith* that says, “Whoever tries to impress the people by his manner of prayers (*salat*),

will be resurrected in the form of a donkey.” And this is quite true because what can be more donkey-like than a man trying to impress the slaves of God instead of directing his attention to God Himself?! Now, if someone calls us a donkey, we feel insulted, but why should we feel insulted, if night and day our acts resemble those of a donkey?”

2. The conditions necessary to obtain presence of heart and pleasure from acts of worship, especially *salat*.

One of his students says that Agha Behjat was asked, “Our lives have passed away and we still have not experienced pleasure (*halaawa, lazzat*) from our worship, especially *salat*. What is your advice so that we can taste some of the pleasures that our infallible leaders (A) have described?”

The esteemed master replied, “This is something that we would all like to experience!” The student replied, “Please, Agha, you have a high status in these matters, while we are empty-handed. What should we do?” Agha Behjat again gave a modest reply, saying, “Perhaps your own status is one that I envy...”.

However, the student was insistent, and so Agha Behjat replied, “This pleasure that you seek in worship has two prerequisites; one outside *salat*, and one within *salat* itself. What is necessary before *salat* and outside of it is that a person abstains totally from sin, and does not blacken his heart with the disgrace of disobedience, because sin will rob his heart of light. As for the second requirement, within the *salat* itself a man must create a barrier around himself so that no thought other than the remembrance of God can enter. He must not allow his thoughts to stray away from God even for an instant. [In this manner, you will achieve what you seek.]”

To another scholar who asked a similar question, he responded, “In order to achieve absolute control of one’s thoughts in *salat*, and to acquire presence of heart, the groundwork must begin outside and prior to *salat*. One must control one’s five senses during the day and be careful about what he allows himself to observe, hear, eat etc. This will enable him to achieve presence of mind and heart in *salat*.”

To a young student, he said in reply to the same question, “Never knowingly let your thoughts drift away from God in *salat*.”

3 Sincere intention and harmony between knowledge and action

He was asked by a scholar:

"Agha, what should we bear in mind so that our intention in wearing the *amamah* (turban) is sincere?"

He replied:

"Your criterion in your acts must be Allah swt's religion. Always ask yourself whether your words and deeds conform with the *shari'a* or not. You should make the *niyyat* that the knowledge ('ilm) that you possess and will gain in the future, will always be translated into actions. In other words, there should be perfect harmony between what you know and what you do. The greatest misfortune is when scholars act without proper knowledge or possess knowledge but do not act upon it. So make a firm resolve that your knowledge and actions will be harmonious."

Another student reports that Agha said to him about the same matter:

"An '*alim* who does not act on his knowledge is like the candle that illuminates the path for others but itself burns away."

4. Trust and reliance on Allah swt

Ayatullah Misbah narrates that Agha Behjat once said to him:

"One day I was sitting in my room and could hear the voices in the street outside. I went out and saw that my neighbour's son was playing in the street when a beggar approached him saying, "I am a needy person. Can you please go into your house and get something for me?"

The boy replied, "Why don't you ask your mother if you want something?" The beggar said, "I don't have a mother. You go and ask your mother to give me something."

Agha Behjat remarked, "I was struck by this conversation and the innocence of the child who had so much trust and faith in his mother that he felt that she could solve any problem. And then he said, '**If only we could develop the same absolute trust and reliance on Allah swt that this child had in his mother. Indeed all our problems would be solved if only we sincerely turned to Him for all our needs!**'"

5. If we constantly think of Imam-eZamana (A.S.), would he not think of us?

Agha Quddus recalls that he once asked Agha Behjat:

"My presence in the village where I have gone for *tableegh* was very productive. The people have responded positively, treated me with respect and heeded my religious advice.

However, they are very poor and the money that they give me in the months of Muharram and Ramadhan is very little. In other places where I can go, the public is not so receptive, but they pay more."

Agha Behjat replied, **"If you make an intention to enter into the employment of Imam Mahdi (A.S.), do you imagine that he will not look after you?"**

6. Care in narrating traditions

Agha Quddus narrates that once he was recounting his program and *tableeghi* activities performed during the month of Ramadhan to Agha Behjat and he said:

"I do not go on the pulpit in the day time in the month of Ramadhan and only deliver my talks and lectures at night."

Agha Behjat asked him why, and he replied, "Because I have some doubts about certain *ahadith* that I recite and I am afraid that if they are incorrect [then my fasts will become invalid]."

Agha Behjat stated: "Then at night are you certain about these traditions that you feel confident in repeating them?"

Agha Quddus says: **"I realised that he disapproved of my actions and was advising me to be certain of the facts before I repeated them to others."**

7. Tabligh by Action (and not only words)

Hujjatu'l Islam Lutfi says: "One day, after the morning prayers I approached Ayat. Behjat and requested him to give me some advice".

He said, "*kunu du'atan nasi ilallahi bighayri alsinatikum*" [2] **"Call people to Allah swt with something other than your speech."**

I understood that although as a scholar, my responsibility was to engage in *tabligh* (propagating the faith), Agha wanted to draw my attention that the **best *tabligh* was not that which was delivered from pulpits, but that which was demonstrated by conduct.**

8. Staying away from Sin

Ayat. Shaykh Jawad Kerbalai, the great scholar of akhlaq remarks:

"I had a great benefit from the many years that I studied under Ayat. Behjat. In that time I also witnessed first-hand many of the wondrous gifts that he has been granted. Among his words of wisdom I recall:

He always insisted that no progress could be made without abandoning sin. He used to say, **"The great and special bounties of Allah are available freely to all His true servants, the only requirement is that a person has to qualify for these gifts. The only way to qualify for these special favours is by abandoning the disobedience of Allah swt."**

Of course, there must be some commitment to attain proximity to Allah swt as well. The more a person knows the station of God (attains *ma'rifat*) and the more he loves Him, the more important it is to avoid every sin, even minor ones and even loss of concentration in His presence in worship.

It is because some servants reach this stage of proximity that it is said, "*hasanaatu'l abrar, sayyiatu'l muqarrabeen*", or "the virtuous acts of the righteous people are (only) ordinary acts for the close servants".

Once a student who had only recently joined the *hawza* asked Ayat Behjat:

"I have come to the *hawza* to attain knowledge. What should I do so that I can become a proper scholar?"

Ayat. Behjat lowered his head and remained silent for a while, then he said, **"There is no difference between a *hawza* student and anybody else. What is important is that he does not commit a sin."**

On another occasion he was asked: **"What is the best *dhikr* (invocation)?"** He replied, "In the opinion of this simple servant, the best *dhikr* is the *dhikr* of action! What I mean is **refraining from**

sinful beliefs (*aqida*) and sinful conduct (*'amal*). Goodness and true success will only come from this way."

In a letter, he was asked **how one could attain proximity to God and also gain closeness to His *khalifah*, the Imam of our time (AF).**

He replied: "*Bismihi ta'ala*. **Refrain from sin and pray the *salat* at the exact time.**"

9. The Secret of Salaat

Ayat Behjat has said:

"*Namaz* (Salaat) symbolizes the Ka'ba. The *Takbirarut'l Ihram* stands for casting aside everything other than Allah swt and entering His haram (sanctuary). The *Qiyam* represents a conversation between two friends. The *Ruku'* symbolizes the bowing of a slave in front of his master and the *Sajdah* is the ultimate display of lowliness, humility and helplessness in front of the Master. **And when the slave returns from such a *Namaz*, the souvenir he brings back is the greeting of peace (*salaam*) from his Lord...**"

10. Staying Awake at Dawn (*Sahr*) and in the Night

Ayat. Ahmadi says:

"**Ayat Behjat always advised us to stay awake in worship between dawn and sunrise and to rise in the night for prayer, (*Namaz-e-Ta-hajjud/Salaatul Layl*). He even said, "I actually believe that it was through these very two acts that the Prophet (S) acquired his perfect gnosis (*ma'rifat*) of Allah swt."**

Once I asked him about the *hadith* of the Imams (A.S.) that **"We eagerly await Thursday nights so that the gates of Allah's mercy are opened. We, the family of the Prophet (SAWW), are blessed with an increase in our knowledge on every Thursday night and every night of Qadr."**

Ayt. Behjat replied: "Indeed, these are special times when the mercy of Allah swt is especially available. **And one of the best of times is the *sahr* (dawn).** And he repeated these words "*sahr, sahr*" several times."

Ayat. Behjat relates from his teachers that whenever they desired to receive greater favour and understanding from Allah swt, they would take advantage of the solitude, peace and abundant blessings that is available in the depths of the night and at dawn. At these times, one can form a connection with God that is not easily possible at other times.

11. The First Steps in the Journey to God (Sayr Ilallah)

Ayat Behjat has said:

“The first step in the journey towards God and in attaining His proximity is for a servant to realise that he has allowed a gulf to form between himself and his Master. He must ensure at all costs that he does not allow this gulf to widen and this must be his first goal. When he has put that control in place, then he may begin the practices that will gradually draw him closer and closer to his Lord.”

12. The Value of Contemplation and Thought

Agha Shahi remarks:

“Ayat Behjat is constantly stressing the importance of controlling one’s tongue and maintaining silence. He would say, “We must control our speech. We should spend 23 hours of the day in contemplation and thought, and only one hour in speech; in fact, often even that is too much.”

13. Being in a State of Constant Dhikr

Ayt. Behjat often advises his students to inculcate the habit of being *da’im al-dhikr*, i.e. remaining in constant remembrance of Allah swt. He has said, “Someone who is constantly in *dhikr*, will always perceive himself in the presence of Allah swt and will be continuously communicating with Him.”

For those who want to combat *waswasa*, (constant suspicion of the motives of others), he recommends highly to continually recite the “*tahlil*”, which is the *dhikr*, “*La Ilaha Illallah*”.

Another great contemporary scholar, **Ayt. Hasan Hasanzadeh Amuli** has remarked that *tahlil* is *al-dhikr-al-khafi* (secret *dhikr*); i.e. it

can be constantly repeated without anyone else being aware of what you are doing, because this *dhikr* can be pronounced without even moving the lips, unlike other *dhikrs* like “Subhanallah” or Alhamdulillah”!

14. Not Considering one's own Virtuous Deeds as 'Significant'

Ustad Khusrushahi relates: Ayt. Behjat always considers the virtuous deeds and the worship that he performs as insufficient.

He often says, “How good it would be that when a person performs virtuous deeds and acts of worship, he says to himself, “I have done nothing great”, but when he sees the virtuous acts of others, he admires them, thinking, “what a noble deed they have performed.””

The Ustad concludes, “In other words, his advice is to consider one's own virtuous acts as insignificant, while regarding highly the good deeds of others.”

15. Getting the Seal of Approval of Imam al-Asr (AF)

Ayt Behjat once advised the students of *hawza*: “We students should constantly be thinking about how we can earn the seal of approval of our master, the Wali al-Asr (AF).”

All students, whether junior or graduates or preachers, should be concerned about how they learn their lessons, what should their attitude be and how they should conduct themselves.

They should continually ask themselves if their attitude, conduct, speech and actions would please their master when they are presented to him and would he approve of them.

Ayt. Behjat says that: “If this thought is always at the back of our minds, we will never stray in our conduct, speech or deeds.”

16. The Purpose of Higher Islamic Studies

Ayt. Behjat greatly encourages students who are pursuing higher Islamic studies and frequently advises junior students also by saying, “Whenever you learn something new, immediately apply this

knowledge to improve your *wajib* acts and to help you in staying away from sinful acts. He would remind them of the *hadith*, “*man ‘amila bima ‘alima, warrathahu’llahu ‘ilma ma la ya’lam*”, **whoever acts on what he knows, Allah swt will teach him what he does not know.**[3]

17. It is the Proximity to Allah swt that matter in the end

To senior students, his words are more thought provoking. One of his students recalls, “I remember once when I was accompanying him from his house to the mosque where he led the prayers. **Ayt Behjat turned to me and asked:** “A student starts with “*muqaddamat*” (introductory lessons) and then studies the “*ma’alim*” and “*mughni*” and then where does he go next?” I said, “*lum’ah*”. He asked, “then what?” I said, “*makasib*”. He asked, “then what?” I said, “*kifayah*”. He asked, “then what?” I said, “*Dars al-kharij*”. He asked, “then what?” I said, “He attains *ijtihad*”. Once again, he asked, “then what?”

The student continues, “**This was a great lesson to me. I realised that knowledge itself was not the goal; it was only the means (to achieve the goal) i.e. to gain the proximity of Allah swt. If at every one of these successive stages, the student did not achieve even a little more proximity to Allah swt, then he has not progressed much at all.**”

18. How to Train one’s Soul (Tahdhib al-Nafs)

Once, some *hawza* students from Lebanon requested Ayt. Behjat for spiritual and *akhlaqi* (moral) advice. He replied: “**One of the most beneficial actions in these matters is to sit with your fellow students every day and study one *hadith* from the chapter *jihad al-nafs* of the book *Wasail al-Shi’a* of Shaykh Hurr al-Amili.** [4]Of course, the *hadith* must be discussed properly, pondered over carefully and then transformed into action. This will be a spiritual tonic that within one year, will transform an individual in a way that he will himself see the change.”

19. The Status of Supplication (Du’a)

Ayt. Behjat believes that *du’a* has a very great status and insists that *du’a* governs the outcome of every stage of our lives.

Ustad Hadawi relates: "My daughter was very ill and I came to Ayt. Behjat and asked him to pray for her. He told me, "You yourself recite the following *du'ath* three times every day: "*Allahumma ishfiha bi shifaa-ika, wa daawiha bi dawaa-ika, wa 'aafiha bi 'aafiyatik*" "**O Allah, cure her with Your cure, and treat her with Your medicine, and restore her health with Your strength**". Then, after the third time say: "*Bi'l Imami'l-Kazim (A.S.), fa innaha amatuka wa bintu 'abdik*". "**By the sake of Imam al-Kazim (A.S.), for she is your servant, and the daughter of your servant.**"

And this concludes the section on this great scholar and close servant of Allah swt (may Allah swt prolong his life, Ameen).

Condensed from "Bargi az Daftar-e Aftaab", A Leaf from the Book of Radiance (About the Life of Ayatullah Behjat). AJ260106.

[1] This is now translated into English as Combat with the Self, available from ICAS Press.

[2][1] Usul al-Kafi, vol. 2, p. 77 - quoting imam al-Sadiq (A).

[3] Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 78, p. 189.

[4] This chapter has been translated into English and is available from the Islamic College for Advanced Studies (ICAS) Press, London.

Uswat al-Aarifeen - A Look at the Life of Ayatullah Bahjat by Yasin

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A summary of what has been written about the great gnostic Ayatullah Bahjat. It includes anecdotes from his life, his teachings and the views of others.

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INTRODUCTION

Praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Praise to Allah Who sent, from the gardens of His Mercy, trustees: messengers to guide people to the straight path. Then He made Imamate and Wilayat a fountainhead from which thirsty souls drink. Then He granted, from the mountain of His generosity, abundance of *fiqh* after the absence of His greatest *wali* (as) so the righteous remnant from among the seekers of the truth may quench their thirst from it.

Since that day, hundreds of years have passed. During them, many divine theologians came and went by; each one of them was like a torch that lit the path for those who tread it. Some of them earned fame, their name became prominent, whereas some of them remained unknown across these centuries.

As regarding the creed's *faqihs*, they had another pull when they mixed biographies in the *fiqh*-related views with the conduct in the worlds of the unknown.

Our contemporary *faqih*, Ayatollah Bahjat, is one of those described by Imam Ali (as) in these words: "Great is the Creator in their hearts, so everything besides Him is in their eyes small." He is a great wise man. The light of his presence glitters in the gathering of the Gnostics, and the souls in his revered audience shine. His student, mentor Rida Baqi Zadeh, author of *Bergi az Daftar Aftab*, says the following in the introduction to this book: "Since the day when breezes from the loved one blew upon me, when the flower of existence opened, and I was guided to the full truth in the self, where success is achieved through pulls of the Lord, I realized that reaching the real loved one cannot be achieved except through guidance from one who is familiar with the path. I, therefore, resorted to the Imams (as) so I could uphold them and plead to them. It is then that this sacred tradition met me on the road: 'Keep company with those whose company reminds you of Allah and whose logic increases your knowledge.' And thus it was. I upheld the fact that the adored One does not leave those who seek His path alone or lets them rely on themselves. The earth is never without divine guides. I was looking for a role model that guides me to the path of the loved One during the absence of the sun of the Household of Inspiration (as) so I could, through seeing him, polish the dust away from the heart and fuse myself through remembrance of the loved One into all existence. During this time, I saw all of that and more. I saw it manifesting itself in the personality of one who is unique in his time, a wise Gnostic, one who drowns his soul into the remembrance of the loved One, who is the light of the hearts of the seekers, the joy of the Gnostics, the perfect Gnostic, the Salman of the time, the one who is truly loyal to the greatest Ayatollah, the Commander of the Faithful Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) in his knowledge and practice, namely Ayatollah Muhammed Taqi Bahjat, may Allah prolong his wide shade. I knew that the truth Gnostic is not known except by Allah or by a Gnostic like him, so I kept earnestly looking for everyone who could have breathed a fragrance of his holy breath, and about any written text from which the fragrance of his holy soul

emanates, hence this book that is in your hands, dear reader, my final merchandise, having braved many hardships. I present it to those who seek the role model in the pure branches of knowledge.

"So, the study of biographies of such great men can instill hope for lighting the minds of men of virtue, scholars, students, professors of the *hawza* (religious seminary), universities and the sons of the nation. The book in your hands, dear reader, is the summary of what has been written and said about this great divine Gnostic. In it, I try to acquaint the Arab reader with this Islamic personality that mixed between the pursuit of knowledge and disseminating it as well as walking along the path of Allah. He is described by imam Khomeini as one "... who enjoys the ability for 'death by choice'; in other words, he can extract his soul from his body then returns it any time he wants. This is regarded as one of the lofty stations the Gnostics can reach along the trip to the path and the Gnostic conduct."

CHAPTER ONE

Glimpses of the Life of Grand Ayatollah Bahjat

Grand Ayatollah Muhammed Taqi Bahjat Fomani was born in late 1334 A.H. to a God-fearing family well known for its piety in the conservative city of Foman in the Gailan governorate. He was not yet sixteen months old when fate claimed his mother so he would taste the bitterness of being an orphan while still a suckling baby. There is an interesting incident to narrate about why Ayatollah Bahjat was named "Muhammed Taqi" which was narrated by one of those close to him, and I think that narrating it here is not without a nicety:

The father of Sheikh Bahjat passed away while his son was 16 – 17 of age after falling sick to an epidemic. He became bed-ridden, and his condition of his health deteriorated to the extent that his family lost hope for his recovery from the disease. The father of the sheikh narrates that he heard in this state a call as if it was saying, "Leave him! You have nothing to do with him. He is father of Muhammed Taqi".

Then he lost consciousness as he was in that state, so much so that his mother thought he died. But after a short while, the father of the sheikh woke up and stood up and after that recovered his health fully.

After the passage of a few years, the sheikh's father decided to get married after having completely forgotten the incident of his falling sick and the call which he then heard. When he was blessed with his first son, he called him "Mehdi" after his own father (grandfather of Sheikh Bahjat). After that he was blessed with a daughter then with a son whom

he named "Muhammed Hussain". He did not remember this incident except after he had been blessed with his fourth son; so, he decided to call him "Muhammed Taqi". But this son fell in a water pool and drowned. The father of the sheikh again named his fifth son with whom Allah blessed him with this same name, "Muhammed Taqi", which later became Grand Ayatollah Bahjat.

Yes, indeed, Ayatollah Bahjat was reared in the laps of a man whose heart was filled with the warmth of loving Ahl al-Bayt (as) and grief for their tragedies, particularly the tragedies of Abu Abdullah (as). He grew up in the environments of the mourning *majalis* for Imam al-Hussain, drinking of their springs. Since his early life, he avoided playing and having fun like other children. The signs of genius showed on him, and his face was painted with the marks of conviction and uprightness. It was obvious this child would have a glorious future in the field of knowledge and attainment.

He finished his elementary studies at the city's traditional study circles (known as *katatib*), then he started his theological studies in the same city. Anyhow, his soul, that was thirsty for perfection, did not quench its thirst by what he had received of branches of knowledge in Foman; therefore, he left it after having finished the preparatory stage of religious sciences in it and left for Iraq where he was honored by residing in sacred Kerbala in 1348. He was then almost fourteen.

According to what was transmitted by one of his close students, His Holiness mentor Bahjat had told him that he had come of age and became a man of responsibility one year after his stay in Kerbala. Yes, the hand of the divine mercy remains caring for the righteous servants since their birth up to their youth, the lights of love and kindness being compassionate to them so they would become in the future torches emitting light along the path of those who seek the most Kind One, the most Exalted, the most Great.

Thus, Ayatollah Bahjat spent four of his honorable lifespan in sacred Kerbala, inhaling the closeness to Abu Abdullah (as), the fragrance of the purity of his soul, cultivating himself thereby. During that period, he studied the largest portion of the books of *fiqh* and *usool* taught to him by the great scholars in that holy city.

In 1352 A.H., he went to Najaf al-Ashraf to continue his studies and acquire the theological branches of knowledge. He attended the courses of the *Sutoohstage* [an equivalent to a study for a Master's

degree] under the tutelage of a number of Ayatollahs including Ayatollah mentor Murtada Taleqani. Despite that, his determination was not confined to continuing his studies but he focused most of his attention on looking for the men of Allah, His righteous servants, so he could satisfy his thirst from their fountainhead, the thirst of his soul which was eager to turn the phases of perfection and reach the most sublime objective.

One of the students of the mentor says the following: "During two years which I spent under the pulpit of his lessons, I never heard him talk about himself except on very rare occasions. One of those occasions is that he talked about the process of lauding the moral status of his mentor, Naeeni the critic. He said, 'I used to participate during my young days in the congregational prayer services led by our mentor, al-Naeeni, and I sometimes used to realize some of his spiritual conditions during the prayers.'"

IN THE COURTYARD OF THE GENIUSES OF *FIQH* AND *USOOL*

Having completed the Sutooh stage and realized the lessons of great professors, such as Sayyid Abul-Hassan al-Isfahani, Agha Mirza al-Naeeni, he entered in the courtyard of knowledge and virtue so he could complete his higher studies at the hands of the great *`allama* al-Hajj Sheikh Muhammad Hussain al-Gharawi al-Isfahani who is known as al-Kampani. Through his piercing intellect and sound judgment, he was able to follow the waves of deep intellectual waves and precise pursuits which *`allama* al-Kampani used to dictate to his students through his swift and roving intellect, seeking help from Allah, relying on Him, the most Great One, the most Sublime.

Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Musbah says the following in this regard, "Ayatollah Bahjat studied most of his fiqh with the late Sheikh Muhammad Kazim al-Shirazi, student of the late Mirza Muhammad Taqi al-Shirazi, who is one of the prominent professors of al-Najaf al-Ashraf. He started studying the Usool at the hands of the late Naeeni and finished the greatest portion in the presence of the late Sheikh Muhammad Hussain al-Kampani al-Isfahani whether in the science of Usool or in other aspects and dimensions."

BIOGRAPHIES, CONDUCT AND GNOSTICISM

During his studies, and shortly before reaching adolescence, Ayatollah Bahjat paid attention to self-cultivation and moral perfection. He, therefore, kept since residing in Kerbala looking for a professor of manners to

embrace and cultivate him. He heard about Ayatollah Sayyid al-Qadi being in Najaf al-Ashraf, so he felt honored to reside in this city so he could be inspired in manners by keeping company with his prominent mentor, the late al-Hajj Sheikh Muhammad Hussain al-Isfahani al-Kampani.

Sheikh Musbah al-Yazdi says the following in this regard: "The impact of the late Sheikh Muhammad Hussain al-Isfahani was obvious on the conduct of the mentor, Ayatollah Bahjat. He used to quote some of his pursuits with admiration. We used to see samples of his conduct which reminded us of his citing the mentor. It was quite obvious that this mentor had a great impact on building his moral character."

The mentor also attended lessons in manners by Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar in al-Najaf al-Ashraf before being tutored by the spiritual scholar and famous Gnostic, His Holiness Ayatollah Sayyid Ali al-Qadi, may Allah Almighty be pleased with him. He started his studies with him and drank of the spring of his niceties and care when he was eighteen of age; therefore, the mentor took long strides in the stages of Gnosticism even when he was in the prime of his youth.

Sheikh Musban al-Yazdi says the following: "The mentor benefited from his being in the presence of the late al-Hajj Mirza Ali al-Qadi in as far as manners and morals are concerned and directly, and he was tutored by him for long years. Ayatollah al-Qadi was specialist in cultivating persons morally. Each of the late *allama* Tabatabai, the late Ayatollah Sheikh Muhammad Taqi al-Amuli and the late Ayatollah Sheikh Ali Muhammad Burujardi as well as a large number of other great men of knowledge and even some religious authorities from his lessons in manners and Gnosticism."

Ayatollah Bahjat quotes some pursuits from other individuals such as Ayatollah Sheikh Murtada Taleqani. He says, "During those days, someone was trying to find out the number of those who were committed to reciting the supplication by Abu Hamzah al-Thumali during the *qunoot* of the *witr* prayer rite during the eves of the month of Ramadan and in the shrine of Imam Ali, peace be with him. When this person made a count of these individuals, he found out their number exceeding seventy men. The number of people who were committed to rituals and to spirituality at that time was a lot more than it is in our time, and this is regrettable. Of course, we do not know the unknown. Perhaps people undertake these forms of worship at their homes nowadays, but we can say for sure that the commitment for acts of adoration has seen a decline in our times. This is quite regrettable, indeed."

In his memoirs, one of the students of Bahjat the mentor has written the following: "Someone heard that more than seventy men were reciting the supplication by Abu Hamzah al-Thumali in their *witr* prayer and in the shrine of Imam Ali, peace be with him, so he decided to verify the number of those who have committed themselves to so doing during his time. He found out that their number did not exceed fifty men, as I remember, and the person speaking was the Tehrani."

PHILOSOPHY

Ayatollah Bahjat studied the signals of Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and the travels of the most highly spiritual persons with professor Ayatollah Sayyid Hussain Baduba-Ay.

MIGRATION TO HOLY QUM

Ayatollah Bahjat return to his homeland, Foman, after having completed his studied in the lunar year 1363. He stayed in that city for few months then he decided to return to the theological seminary in al-Najaf al-Ashraf. But prior to his departure for al-Najaf, he decided to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Lady of Ahl al-Bayt, Fatima the infallible one, peace be with her, in the city of holy Qum and to familiarize himself with the conditions at the theological seminary in this city. He stayed there for few months. But those days coincided with the demise of senior professors of al-Najaf al-Ashraf who passed away one after the other, something that prompted him to decide to stay in the holy city of Qum .

In this city, the mentor attended the classes of Grand Ayatollah the late Hujjat Kuwah-Kamrah-Ay and distinguished himself among his students. Then he attended the classes of the late Ayatollah Burujardi in the company of great ayatollah such as imam al-Khomeini, Gulpaygani and others.

Sheikh Musbah says the following in this regard: "Ayatollah Bahjat was one of the distinguished students who maintained regular attendance of the classes offered by the late Ayatollah Burujardi. It is customary in reference to the Kharij researches that some students are more distinguished than others in fixing the pursuits and submitting confusing matters than others. These students are more precise than their fellows, and their confusing issues take sometimes a great scholarly shape, making answering them a matter that needs more precision and depth than other confusing issues. Ayatollah Bahjat had thus a status in the classes of the late Ayatollah Burujardi."

TEACHING

Ayatollah Bahjat used to teach the high Sutooh in Najaf al-Ashraf when he was attending classes of major ayatollah such al-Isfahani, alKampani and al-Shirazi. In other words, he used to teach and study at the same time, and this was his habit even after his migration to the holy city of Qum .

As regarding teaching the Kharij research, we can say he started teaching Kharij al-Fiqh and the Usool for more than forty years, and he used to teach this subject at his house in order to avoid fame. Many men of virtue benefited from him during those long past years.

USWAT AL-AARIFEEN CHAPTER TWO

A QUICK LOOK AT SOME BIOGRAPHIES OF PROFESSORS OF HIS HOLINESS GRAND AYATOLLAH SHEIKH BAHJAT

In this Chapter, we will cast a quick look at the life of some great professors who played a major role in building the scholarly life of the sheikh, his manners and spirituality. Ayatollah al-Mashkini says, "The professors of Sheikh Ayatollah Bahjat enjoy a lofty scholarly station and a great prominence which make us look at them as we look at the stars in the sky."

GRAND AYATOLLAH SAYYID ALI AGHA AL-QADI

Al-Hajj Mirza Sayyid Ali Agha al-Qadi was born in the city of Tabriz on the 13th of the month of Thil-Hijja of 1282 A.H. Having finished his preparatory study, he was tutored by his father, the late Hajj Sayyid Hussain al-Qadi. Then he attended the lectures of the late Mirza Mousa al-Tabrizi, author of the book titled *Hashiyat al-Rasaail*. He also attended the classes of Mirza Muhamamd Ali al-Qaraj Daghi and completed the classes in Arab and Persian literature of the famous poet Mirza Muhammad Taqi al-Tabrizi who is known as "Hujjatul Islam" and the one given the title "Nir". He quoted many poetic verses by him in both Arabic and Persian languages. Then he migrated to the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf and was honored to reside in it in 1308 A.H. when he was then 26 years old. In the city of Najaf , he was taught by these ayatollahs: Fadil al-Sharabyani, Sheikh Muhammad Hassan al-Mamqani, Sheikh Shari'at, Akhund al-Khurasani and al-Hajj Mirza Hussain al-Khalili.

Sayyid al-Qadi was one of the most respected of the students of al-Hajj Mirza al-Khalili. He also studied in his presence the cultivation of manners.

Sayyid al-Qadi was a Gnostic, a faqih, and a man of a great stature. He also had some miracles and revelations. Allama Sheikh Agha Buzurg al-Tehran wrote the following lines in his book *Tabaqat A'lam al-Shi'a* in his biography: "Sayyid Ali Agha Tabatabai Tabrizi al-Qadi, son of Mirza Hussain son of Mirza Ahmad son of Mirza Raheem, is a scholar, a *mujtahid*, a man of piety and asceticism. I befriended him and kept him company for scores of years, and I found stability in his style, youth in his nature and attributes, generosity in his own self and in his nature. He wrote an exegesis of the Qur'an which starts from the beginning of the Qur'an and ends with the ninety-second verse of Surat al-An'am: 'Say: Allah, then leave them in their wading sporting'".

As for his father, he, too, wrote an exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, and their household was since antiquity a house of knowledge, virtue and piety.

`Allama Hassan Zadeh al-Amuli says the following in his regard: "Ayatollah Sayyid al-Qadi was one of the wonders of time." Then he says, "One of the powerful statements of the late al-Hajj Sayyid Ali al-Qadi is this: 'If one spends half his life looking for a perfect teacher, he does not make much of an achievement.'"

`Allama Hassan Zadeh quotes `allama Tabatabai saying the following while detailing the biography of Sayyid Ali al-Qadi: "The Sayyid was an amazing man. He nurtured many students and was tutored by many professors. He had very strong revelations, let alone his testimonial and Gnostic perfections, conduct and moral behavior."

Grand Ayatollah al-Gharawi al-Isfahai

`Allama Sayyid Muhammad Hussain al-Isfahani, who is famous as al-Kampani, is one of the prominent *mutjahids* and great authorities of his time. Actually, he was a man of *fiqh* the like of whom is quite rare in all times.

The Sayyid was born in the city of al-Kazimiyya on the second of Muharram of 1296 A.H. in the environments of a revered family known for its adherence to the creed and piety. His father, the late al-Hajj Muhammad Hassan, was a well known merchant in al-Kazimiyya. He was given the title "al-Isfahani" because his ancestors were affiliated with the city of Isfahan. His father died when he was still a child, leaving him a huge fortune which he spent on the study of branches of knowledge

and Islamic teachings as well as on achieving good manners. Signs of intelligence and genius emanated from his face since his childhood. He completed his preparatory study in the city of al-Kazimiyya, then he left it to be honored by residing in the city of knowledge and *ijtihad*, al-Najaf al-Ashraf, when he was no more than twenty years old. He studied *fiqh* and *usool* at the hands of a band of prominent professors such as al-Hajj Agha Rida al-Hamadani, Sayyid al-Fisharki, and Akhund Mulla Kazim al-Khurasani, and he attended lessons in philosophy and Gnosticism in the presence of the famous man of wisdom, al-Hajj Mirza Muhammad al-Istihbanati. He sat on the teaching chair in the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf shortly after having resided there due to his genius and general acquisition.

He left behind precious works dealing with *fiqh*, *usool* and philosophy. We would like to point out to some of them:

- n his comment on *Maq'ad Kifayat al-Usool fi 'Ilm al-Usool*
- n his comment on *Al-Makasib fi 'Ilm al-Fiqh*
- n a poem titled "the wise man's precious jewel" which deals with philosophy
- n He also left a *diwan* in Arabic and Persian poetry.

He returned to the mercy of his Lord on the fifth of Dhul-Hijjah of 1361 A.H. at an age exceeding 65 and was buried in the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf beside the shrine of Imam Ali, peace be with him.

Grand Ayatollah al-Hajj Sheikh Muhammad Kazim al-Shirazi

The mentor was born in 1290 A.H. in the city of Shiraz . He was honored by making the pilgrimage to the holy sites in Iraq in the company of his parents in 1300 A.H. and resided in the city of holy Kerbala where he started learning Arabic. His parents returned to Shiraz two years later, but he remained in Kerbala and kept himself busy with the elementary study. He returned to Shiraz fourteen years after his residence in Kerbala. He studied *al-Mutawwal* and *al-Ma'alim* in the presence of the perfect scholar, al-Hajj Sayyid Muhammad al-Kazruni who is well known for his skill in teaching *al-Mutawwal*. He returned to Kerbala two years since his residence in Shiraz , then he went to Samarra in 1310 A.H. in order to continue his studies. He studied the *rasaail* and *makaasib* in the presence of the perfect scholar, Sheikh Hassan Ali al-Tehrani, who is famous for his knowledge and piety, and he attended the classes of the

late Ayatollah Mirza Muhammad Taqi al-Shirazi, and he regularly attended his classes till the day the mentor died.

He left Samarra for al-Kazimiyya where he taught, then he migrated to the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf in order to establish a theological seminary. It is worth mentioning that he used to oversee the answers to most religious edicts of Ayatollah al-Isfahani.

In 1366, one year before his demise, he left the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf with the intention to make the pilgrimage to the shrine of Imam al-Rida, peace be with him. The theological seminary in holy Qum and its dignitaries, such as Ayatollah Burujardi, Hujjat, al-Faydh, al-Khunsari and al-Sadr, welcomed him. In 1367 he died and was buried in one of the chambers of the shrine of Imam Ali, peace be with him.

Grand Ayatollah Mirza Muhammad Hussain al-Naeeni

Ayatollah al-Naeeni was one of the most famous religious authorities of his time, one of the greatest critics and verifiers in the sciences of *fiqh* and *usool*, so much so that he was known as the *mujaddid* in the science of *usool* and the one who excelled in it.

The *`allama* was born in a family known for its knowledge and distinction on the 17th of Dhul-Qi'da of 1376 A.H. in the city of Naeen in the governorate of Isfahan. He completed his elementary study in his home town then migrated to the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf in order to continue his higher study in *fiqh* and *usool*. He was taught by Grand Ayatollah al-Hajj Mirza Muhammad Hassan al-Shirazi the Senior and distinguished himself among his students. He also used to attend the classes of Ayatollah Akhund Muhammad Kazim al-Khurasani in order to show his humbleness and respect for his status.

The *`allama* stood out among the scholars of al-Najaf al-Ashraf due to the abundance of his knowledge and to his acquisition of the sciences of mathematics, wisdom, philosophy, Gnosticism as well as skill in *fiqh* and *usool*. He cultivated the science of *usool*, coining anew in a new form distantly from difficulty and complexity, winning the admiration of those who were familiar with this art.

He also wrote books many of which were published including the following:

- n a dissertation in what is doubtful to wear
- n *Wasilat al-Najat*
- n Reports in the science of *usool* (which was printed several times)

n A dissertation in "there is no harm..."

Ayatollah Naeeni paid special attention particularly to cultivating himself, so he never abandoned the performance of the night prayer, nor was he ever heard articulating a bad word. He used to organize his precious time and not waste it at all. He used to spend his time in either a scientific research, or looking after the affairs of people, or in helping them with their needs. He was moderate with regard to what he ate or put on, and he was extremely cautious in faring with the public funds. He never took advantage of the blessed "Imam's share" and other rights stated in the Shari'a for his own personal benefit. Rather, he used to meet his life's expenses from his own income.

As regarding his political and social services, he wrote a book titled *Tanbeeh al-Umma wa Tanzeeh al-Milla* [notifying the nation and clearing the name of the creed] during the black dictatorial epoch in Iran . In it, he explained through logic and wisdom the norms of despotism and dictatorship, reminding the scholars and jurists of their religious duty towards the situation then. He also explained in the book the limits of the powers of the ruler and the Islamic government, pointing out to the chapters of the admonishment by Imam Ali (AS) to Malik al-Ashtar.

This book won the attention of the struggling authorities at the time; therefore, Ayatollah Akhund al-Khurasani and Ayatollah Sheikh Abdullah al-Mazandarani issued their authorization, supporting the revolution of the constitution and announcing its origins as being derived from the Islamic faith of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be with him and his progeny.

Ayatollah Naeeni and a group of his distinguished students were banished together with Ayatollah al-Isfahani and Ayatollah al-Khalisi to Iran because of their struggle to change the government in Iraq .

Ayatollah Naeeni entered the city of Qum after a short stay in the cities of Kermanshah and Hamadan , and he was busy teaching and performing the congregational prayer service. He returned to al-Najaf al-Ashraf one year after his stay in the holy city of Qum .

He joined his Lord on the 26th of Jumada I of 1358 A.H. after a lifetime of service, struggle and perseverance for nurturing a united generation that carries a Qur'anic message.

Grand Ayatollah Agha Diya ad-Deen al-Iraqi

Grand Ayatollah Agha Diya ad-Deen al-Iraqi was born in the city of Sultan-Abad (Persian Iraq, Arak) in the year 1278 A.H. He completed his preparatory study in his home town then migrated to the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf in order to complete his study. He attended classes by great Ayatollahs such as Muhammad al-Fisharki, Akhund al-Khurasani, Sayyid Kazim al-Yazdi and the mentor of the Shari'a, al-Isfahani.

Signs of his intelligence and genius were obvious during the first years of his study. He started teaching at an early age, and many students gathered round him because of his oratory and the ease of his explanation. He distinguished himself among great teachers following the demise of his professor, the late Akhund al-Khurasani. He studied *fiqh* and *usool* for more than thirty years and many students were nurtured by him. Some of them became later on sources for *taqlid*. Among his works, one can point out to a book containing articles about *usool*. Finally, this working scholar moved to the mercy of his Lord in the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf in the year 1361 A.H.

Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Abu al-Hassan al-Isfahani

Ayatollah Sayyid Abu al-Hassan al-Isfahani was born in the Madisa village, one of the villages of Lanjan district of the city of Isfahan . He completed his elementary study in the Nimarud School in Isfahan where he was taught by Mirza Abu al-Ma'ali al-Kalbasi, benefiting greatly from him. He migrated to Najaf al-Ashraf in 1307 A.H. in order to complete his study and attended classes by its great professors. He earned the degree of *ijtihād* in the classes offered by Ayatollah Akhund al-Khurasani. He rose to distinction with Ayatollah Naeeni after the demise of the late Ayatollah Akhund al-Khurasani and Ayatollah Muhammad Taqi al-Shirazi. After the death of Ayatollah Naeeni, he became the only religious authority for most of Shiite lands.

Imam al-Khomeini and another group of contemporary jurists commented on his scholarly dissertation (*risala*) due to its inclusion. This great scholar joined his Lord on a Monday, the 9th of the month of Dhul-Hijja of 1365 A.H. in the city of al-Kazimiyya. Addressing his holy body, Ayatollah Muhammad Hussain Kashifal-Ghita made these statements: "Congratulations to you the ascension to your Lord! How happy you have been alive and dead! Your life was joined with management and greatness, making people through it forget the past great ones, following the coming ones. You were also born twice: Once you earned experience and knowledge, and once you acted upon what you had earned!"

He, may Allah have mercy on his soul, was characterized by good attributes and characteristics, and his pure soul inspired one to be firm and steadfast for the sake of the Adored One. He surpassed his peers in managing the affairs, in administration and knowledge, and he was generous, articulate, orator, making his classes the most busy and popular among those offered at Najaf al-Ashraf's theological seminary.

He participated in the struggle of the Muslim Iraqi people against colonialism and was banished to Iran together with some struggling scholars. He had honorable stands towards the incidents at the Guharshad Mosque in the holy city of Mashhad .

Grand Ayatollah Sheikh Murtada al-Taleqani

Sheikh Murtada al-Taleqani was born in 1280 A.H. in the city of Taleqan . He learned the Qur'an and Persian literature in the *katateeb* of the city then migrated to Tehran and from there to Isfahan so he could attend classes by its great scholars such as Ayatollah Abu al-Ma'ali al-Kerbalai, the man of wisdom al-Qashqa'I Mulla Muhammad al-Kashi and others.

He migrated to the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf and was tutored at the hands of its great scholars such as Akhund al-Khurasani, Sayyid Kazim al-Yazdi, the mentor of the Shari'a al-Isfahani, Mirza Muhammad Taqi al-Shirazi and others.

He paid attention to nurturing himself and purifying his soul so he could fold the stages of perfection and reach the ultimate objective. The mentor, may Allah have mercy on him, abandoned the world and spent most of his time teaching the students and cultivating them. Many of them later on rose to distinction, becoming authorities and great scholars in our time.

The mentor, may Allah have mercy on him, lived single all his life, and he was residing in the school of Sayyid al-Yazdi of the reliable niche in the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf till he died there in 1364 A.H.

The wise `allama Sayyid Hussain Badkubah-Ay

The `allama was born in 1293 A.H in the village of Dalan in the city of Badkubah . He was tutored at the hands of his father and completed the preparatory study and that of literature in his presence. He migrated to Tehran after the death of his father and resided at the Sadr School in that city. He studied mathematics and philosophy at the hands of the late Sayyid Abu al-Hassan Jalwah and the late Mirza Hashim al-Ashkuri. He

also studied logic for seven years of continuous effort in the presence of his professors teaching this science.

He migrated to al-Najaf al-Ashraf and attended the classes of Grand Ayatollah Akhund al-Khurasani. This coincided with the first days of writing the *Kifayah* book. He also studied *fiqh* at the hands of Ayatollah Sheikh Muhammad Hassan al-Mamqani. Soon many virtuous scholars gathered round him to benefit from his views and theories. Finally, he moved to the mercy of his Lord in the eve of the 28th of the holy month of Shawwal of 1358 A.H. in the bath house of the sacred shrine and was buried in the neighborhood of his holy grandfather, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be with him.

Grand Ayatollah the authority Kuwah-Kamrah-Ay

The authority Ayatollah was a scholar who acted upon his knowledge, a perfect jurist, a virtuous traditionist, a skilled wise man, a precise man of *usool*, a verifier of narrators of hadith, a man who acquired knowledge of what is rational and what is transmitted. He was born in the month of Sha'ban of 1310 A.H. in the city of Tabriz in a religious family known for its piety.

His revered lineage goes back to the most respected Sayyid Muhammad al-Masri who is nicknamed al-Hijazi, one of the offspring of Ali al-Asghar son of Imam Ali ibn al-Hussain Zain al-Abidin, peace be with him. The authority ayatollah enjoyed an exceptional intelligence and a swift roving intellect whereby he was able to complete his preparatory study at an astounding pace so he could study after it *fiqh*, *usool*, mathematics, rationale, ancient and modern medicine as well as a generous amount of modern sciences such as physics and chemistry.

He completed the *Sutooh* stage in *fiqh* and *usool* at the hands of his father, the late Sayyid Ali Kuwah-Kamrah-Ay. He migrated to al-Najaf al-Ashraf in 1330 when he was twenty years old. He attended classes of great professors such as the *`allama* al-Yazdi of Al-Urwah al-Wuthqa (the reliable niche), the mentor of the Shari'a al-Isfahani, Mirza Naeeni and Agha Diya ad-Deen al-Iraqi.

In 1349 A.H., he returned to the holy city of Qum and was one of the greatest of its scholars and senior professors of its seminary.

He won the attention of Grand Ayatollah al-Haeri, founder of the theological seminary in Qum, who asked him to lead the congregational prayer service in his place during the late years of his holy life. He also taught in his place after his demise and continued to teach and

answer requests for edicts. He looked after people's affairs till the last moment of his life despite his weakness and deteriorating health.

The Sayyid, may Allah have mercy on him, was a distinctive testimonial for the tradition transmitted from the Infallible Imams, peace be with them, which says [in describing a true believer], "He disobeys his desires, obedient to the command of his Lord, protecting himself, safeguarding his creed." He kept the secrets to himself, so much so that even the closest people to him did not know him as he should have. He, may Allah have mercy on him, was among those who won the honor of meeting the Imam of the Time, may Allah hasten his reappearance. And he was precise in utilizing his time, an avid reader of scholarly and juristic books, not abandoning research or study even on his wedding night.

He left several books in various fields. We would like here to point to some of them:

1. Kitab al-Biya' [a book about real estate]
2. a collection of traditions and *usool*
3. his commentary about the book titled *Al-Kifaya*
4. *Lawami' al-Anwar al-Gharawiyya fi Mursalat al-Athar al-Nabawiyya*
5. *Mustadrak al-Mustadrak*

The Sayyid predicted the hour of his death; so, he gathered some scholars of the seminary and requested some pure soil from the shrine of Imam al-Hussain which he put on his tongue and said, "The last of my ration from the world is the soil of al-Hussain." He consulted the Qur'an regarding his destiny, so the 14th verse of Chapter al-Ra'd [thunder] came up: "To Him belongs the call of the truth". He, therefore, said in an audible voice: "We belong to Allah, and to Him do we return," then his sacred soul left his body.

Having come to know about his demise, Ayatollah Burujardi said, "Now my spine has been broken. The chamber may become a school of a mosque (after the example of the mosque and school of the Hujjatis)," and he instructed the chamber located beside the mosque to be a cemetery for himself and the members of his family. This will was inspired to him in a vision.

Grand Ayatollah Burujardi

Grand Ayatollah Burujardi belongs to a respectable family known for its knowledge and piety. He is one of the Sayyids who belong to the

Infallible Imams, peace be with them. His lineage reaches Imam al-Hasan, the chosen one.

The Sayyid was born in 1292 A.H. in the city of Burujard . He was taught by scholars of this city and finished a good deal of his preparatory study at the hand of his father. He migrated to Isfahan in 1310 A.H. in order to continue his studies and acquire religious studies, and he was then eighteen years old. He was tutored by senior scholars of Isfahan such as the grand ayatollahs and those bearing the title "Hujjatul-Islam" such as Abu al-Ma'ali al-Kalbasi, Sayyid Mir Muhammad Taqi al-Mudarrisi and Akhund Mulla Muhammad al-Kashi, Mirza Jehangir al-Qashqai. He also taught jurisprudence and *usool* in his study in this city.

He migrated to al-Najaf al-Ashraf in 1318 A.H. eight years after having resided in Isfahan and his earning the degree of *ijtiḥad* in it, and he was then twenty-six years old. He benefited from attending classes by great ayatollahs such as the Akhund al-Khurasani, author of *Al-Kifaya*, and `allama al-Yazdi, author of *Al-Urwat al-Wuthqa*. He distinguished himself among the students of the late Akhund for he wrote commentaries about his book titled *Kifayat al-Usool*.

He returned to the city of Burujard in 1328 A.H. after a residence that lasted for ten years in the city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf during which he earned the *ijtiḥad* degree which was awarded to him by the most distinguished of its scholars. During his stay in Burujard, which lasted more than 36 yers, he founded a theological seminary to teach the researches of *Kharij al-Fiqh* and *Usool* in this city. During this period, he was emulated as an authority for *taqleed* by most residents of the western and southern parts of Iran and some districts in the Khurasan governorates and other areas.

He resided in the city of Qum for few months after returning from making a pilgrimage to the shrine of Imam al-Rida, peace be with him, as insisted by Grand Ayatollah al-Haeri and a group of other men of virtue in the theological seminary. During that period, he studied the *Kharij al-Fiqh* and *Usool* researches then returned to his birthplace, the city of Burujard . He returned to holy Qum in the holy month of Muharram of 1364 A.H. after having become the greatest authority for the Shiites in the world.

More than 1,200 men of virtue and prominent mujtahids used to attend his classes in the seminary.

Dr Murtuza Alidinia on his life Some Moral Advice